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THE ANSAYRII,

(OR ASSASSINS,)

WITH

TRAVELS IN THE FURTHER EAST,

IN 1850-51.

INCLUDING

A VISIT TO NINEVEH.

BY

LIEUT. THE HON. F. WALPOLE, R.N.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON :

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1851.



LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

C. Top.

440

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Preparations for the Road—Kindness of Demetrie—Apia Antoniana—Assyrian Inscriptions—Chapel of St. George—Prosperity of the Christians—Antiquity of Bells—Their Church History—Maronite Christians—Housta—Hospitable Entertainment—Woman's Faith—Visit to the Sheik—The Tantoura—Sit Milheim Shebah—The Family of Shebah—Their Conversion—Convent of Ain Wakah—Spinning Pegs of the Wolves—Ta Borge—River of Adonis—Gebaile—Arab Hospitality . . .	1
---	---

CHAPTER II.

Gebaile—Extensive Ruins—Antiquity of Gebaile—Batroun—Situation of the Town—A dirty Englishman—Journey to Latakia—Residence of a Robber Chief—Ascent of Djebel Shakkey—The "Face of God"—Road to Tripoli—Gardens of La Moon—Tripoli—Aqueduct of Brins—Turkish Burial-ground—A Female Lounging-place—Beauty of the Women—The Kadisha—Convent of Dervishes—The American Consul—Eastern Guards—Pond of Sacred Fish—Arab Encampments—Lady Hester Stanhope—Anecdote of Sir John Moore—Village of El Hah—Tartosa—The Thief detected—Court of Justice—Practise as Physician—Kalat el Merkub—Banias—Different kinds of Bread—Djebele—Arrive at Latakia	26
---	----

CHAPTER III.

Latakia—Agreeable Residence—Hospitable Reception—Secret of the Ansayrii—Mode of eliciting it—Extraordinary Sepulchre—Consternation of my Cook—Practise as a Doctor—My Success—Lasting Influence of Moral Evil—The Works of Voltaire—An Arab Ball—An Arab Supper—State of Society—An Irksome Visitor—Moslem Piety—Want of Christian Unity—A Question	
---	--

	PAGE
of Divorce—Its unhappy Results—Turkish Insolence—An unpleasant Adventure—Its Results—Bible of Bishop Theodosius—Extract from Arab Bible—List of Ancient Churches—More Practice—Kindness of a Woman—An Arab Doctor—Prognostications concerning the Ottoman—Worship of the Druses—Turkish Liberality—Political Opinions—How to deal with Turks	61

CHAPTER IV.

Besnada—Tomb of Ibn Hani—Astronomical Disquisition—Snake-Charmers and Salamanders—Anecdote of a Snake-Charmer—The Ophigene of Cyprus—Travellers in the East—Wig of Count de la Borde—Kindness of the Ansayrii—Visit from an Ansayri Woman—An Eastern Pic-Nic—A Moral upon Pleasure—The Djebel Mountains—Eastern Music—Eastern Dances Described—Lectured by the Sheik—Hostility of the Priest—Preparations for Departure—Seclusion of the Ansayrii—Religious Bequests—Sheer-el-Akash—Nahr-el-Kebeer—Village of Sholfatia—Tenure of Land in the District—Eastern Love of Parables—Religious Discussions—Strange Mode of Exorcism	94
--	----

CHAPTER V.

District of Mehalbee—Caldahha—Inducement to settle in the East—Extensive Burial Grounds—Description of their Houses—Patience of the People—Present of a Volume of Petrarch—Theological Discussions—Ein-el-Sakarr—Revolted Village—Sheik Habeeb—His Residence described—Its Furniture—Polite conduct of the young Sheiks—The Sheiks of Religion—Superstitious Charms—Castle of Beni Israel—The Prison of Blood—Reasons for Non-improvement—Interesting Conversation—A School established—A few Reflections	121
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

Appeal to Christian Sympathies—Zama—A Village of Robbers—Kying Aga—Nature of his Influence—The imprisoned Sheik—Kalaat Mahalbee—The Castle described—Value of a Wife—Recognised as an Ansayrii—Their personal Kindness—Miracles and Charms—The Judge of the Ansayrii—Sheik Shemseen Sultan—The Beit Shielf—Ansayrii hiding-places—Kalaat el Sion—Siege by Ibrahim Pasha—Military Defences—Ruins—Hospitality of the Ansayrii—More Ruins—District of Ballidar—Nahr el Kabia—Ibn el Larri—Bedama—Cleanliness of Turkish Villages—Chambers cut in the Rock—Djisser Shogger	143
--	-----

CHAPTER VII.

	PAGE
Djisser Shogger—State of the Village—My Character—Its Solution—Castle of Shogger—The Euphrates Expedition—Population of Shogger—Castle in Ruins—Arabic inscriptions—Ladies criticise my dress—Bigotry of the Turks—History of Mahomet Aga—Strange modes of Litigation—Civility of the Pasha—The Nizam—Drawing the Nizam—Bridge over the Orontes—Village of Arneba—Djerradi—Absence of Wood in Houses—A Surprise in a Vault—Caffir-el-Barah—Sad Feelings produced by Ruins—A Set of Braggarts—Opinions of the English	172

CHAPTER VIII.

A Christian's feelings in the East—Melancholy ruins at Aleppo—Description of the Houses—Stone Sarcophagi—Serai el Melek—Caffir-el-Barah—Subterranean adventure—Natives of Djebel Kaiha—Kaiha—Edlip—Departure from Edlip—Eternal features of the East—Lady Hester Stanhope—Bad Government of the Turks—Free Language of the People—Broken spirit of the Christians—Articles in English newspapers—Vile treatment of Women—Losses of the Christians—Proposals for repayment—Causes of the rising—Turks educated in Europe—Insult to a Christian Woman—The Mussulmans' loss—The Zapties	197
--	-----

CHAPTER IX.

Destruction of Syrian Manuscripts—Grand review of troops—The Yezidis—Confusion of races and faith—Visit from a despised Wife—Solicits a spell to kill—Range of Amanus—Convent of St. Simon Stylites—St. Simon Stylites—Tennyson's Poem—Inspection of the building—Madness of St. Simon—A beautiful apparition—Domestic felicity—Arabic Robinson Crusoe—Bid farewell to my friends—Numerous Sarcophagi—Namous-el-Melek—Kaa—Beau-ideal of an Oriental—Mussulmans oppressed—Primal beauty of Nature—Dress of the different Races—Ruins at Youngis Shi—Ranges of the Beilan—Distant view of Antioch—Fulfilment of Prophecy	223
--	-----

CHAPTER X.

A Strange Adventure—Excellent Entertainment—Disquisition upon Babies—Early Fading of Eastern Beauty—An Innocent Illusion—Household Lecture—Palace of Ibrahim Pasha—Consul's Visitors' Book—Antioch—The Fall of Heraclius—Departure from Antioch—A Beautiful Prospect described—Ain
--

	PAGE
el Kadmous—A plenitude of Waters—Valley of the Beit el Maa—Groves of Daphne—Account of them in Gibbon—My Fame precedes me—Mythology of Daphne—Village of Sinnini—Djebel Okrah—Residence of Dr. Yates—Swadea—Syrian Character of the Franks—Improvements of Mr. Barker . . .	250

CHAPTER XI.

Cheating in the Conscription—Cross the Orontes—Arrival at Djebel Okral—Halt for the night at Casseb—Christian converts—Zeal of the Missionaries—Extensive pine forests—Reported killed—A tribute to a friend—Endeavour to establish a school—My possessions in the East—Legend of the Unicorn . . .	275
---	-----

CHAPTER XII.

Gebaile—Mosque of Sultan Ibrahim—Kalaat-el-Muskab—Civility of the Moutselim—Foray of the Ansayrii—Merkab—Tradition of its Erection—Village of Deir Sufran—Character of the Villagers—Theological Discussion with a Priest—Seclusion of Women in Syria—Village of Saradeen—Kalaat-el-Kadmour—Dress of the Peasantry—An Evening with the Ameers—History of their Migrations—The Kadmousie—Work on the East by Mr. Badger—Descendants of Ishmael—Ormuzd and Ahriman—Uncertain origin of the Druses . . .	287
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

The three Letters commencing the Chapters of the Koran—Mountain of Djebel Seth—Tomb of Joshua—Mockatta of Mowary—Village of Borkah—Borge Safyta—Raid of the Ansayrii on the Christians—Capture of Sheik Abdul Hamyd—Confined at Erzeroum—An extensive Prospect—Necessity of having Religious Principles fortified—District of Kalaat el Hosn—Ruins of Hassan Sulieman—Carried off by the Sheik—Spring of Ein-el-Shem—Ambition seizes me—Wady Shaloof—Village of Brummanee . . .	308
---	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

Summary Punishment—Tartosa—A Story of Eastern Justice—A Definition of Nothing—The Day called Erbat Eiub—Feast at the Saint's Tomb—Volney's Description of the Ansayrii—Feud between the Drousees and the Amamra tribe—Miserable Condition of a poor Woman—In the midst of the Battle—Endeavour to act the Mediator—Become Hostage between the Parties—Djebel Ermayen, or the Mountain of Forty—My Mode of Life	327
--	-----

CHAPTER XV.

Pliny's account of the Ansayrii—Emigrate under Sheik Hassan—	PAGE
Account of them by Gibbon—Description of the Ansayrii—Their	
Dress—Sheiks of Government and Religion—Their strict Reli-	
gious Prejudices—Their Rites and Superstitions—Mode of Ini-	
tiation—Manner of their Marriages—Their character for Honesty	
—Policy of Ibrahim Pasha—Restrictions with regard to Food—	
Outline of their Creed—Their Modes of Prayer—Treatment of	
a Frenchman—Antiquity of planting Groves—The Rout of He-	
raclius—Conspiracy amongst the Greeks—Movement towards	
Greek Unity—The Armenians compared with the Greeks .	342

CHAPTER XVI.

Pashalic of Saida—Rule of Ibrahim Pasha—Ruins and Antiquities	
—Mockattas of the Ansayrii—Their Tribes and Governors—	
Celebrated for the growth of Tobacco—Nahr-el-Kebir—The	
French propose to assist the Ansayrii—Village of Hinadee—	
Quarrel with a Turk—Gross system of Injustice—A Glorious	
Revel—Contrast between Man and Nature—Dedication of Chil-	
dren to their Saints—Suffering from Fever—A dashing Exploit	
—Recover my Steed—Tomb of Abdallah el Morovree—The	
Gardens of Djebele—Piety of Sultan Ibrahim—Apparition of	
Ibrahim—Magical erection of a Mosque—Borge-el-Sabbee—	
Strangely-tempered Mortar—Marriage of my Servant—Tartosa	
—Again practise Medicine—The island of Ruad—Mode of Water	
Supply—Ruins of ancient Fortifications—The Reiha Saltza—	
Antiquities in the Island—Visited by the Knights of Malta—The	
Moutenaseras—Education for Sailors—Songs of the Children—	
Their dread of Foreigners .	363

CHAPTER XVII.

My singular Fortune in my Travels—Diving for Sponges—I practise
Surgery—My great Success—Melancholy Reflections—The
Parable of the Olive Plantation—Snake-Charmers—Description
of the Sponge Boats—Profits of Sponge—Diving—Antiquities
of Tartosa—Temple of the Sun—Sepulchral Excavations—
Tel Akka—Sudden Death of Animals in the East—Eastern
Guide-Books—Kontaret el Brins—Roguery of the Padre—
Rough Treatment of the Missionaries—Their Ideas of Protes-
tantism—A Mussulman and Christian Jury—The Convent of
Lazaris—The Frank Padres of Kanobin—Grandeur of Eastern
Scenery—The Cedars of Lebanon—The Ranges of Lebanon—

	PAGE
Vitality of the Cedar Tree—Figurative use of the Cedar in Prophecy—Supply the Moslem Fleet—Opinions of Decandolle —The Cedars mutilated by Travellers—Peculiar Region of their Growth	400

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Valley of Bshirra—Terraces on the Mountains—Beauty of the Scenery—Importunate Beggars—Intermarriages prevent Pa- triotism—Dress of the Peasantry—Mode of Irrigation in Syria —Gorge of the Kadisha—Mirage in the Plains of Bekaa—Lake Liemon—Remains of the Temple at Liemon—A Natural Bath —Low Condition of the Village—Effect of Moonlight—Village of Nitri—Village of Afka—Source of the Nahr Ibrahim— Religious Reflections—Village of Ferheika—Ruins of Fuckera —Position of Fuckera—Nahr el Kelb—Beyrout—Objects and Results of Travel—Conclusion of my Pilgrimage	432
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THE ANSAYRII.

(THE ASSASSINS.)

TRAVELS IN THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

Preparations for the Road—Kindness of Demetrie—Apia Antoniniana—Assyrian Inscriptions—Chapel of St. George—Prosperity of the Christians—Antiquity of Bells—Their Church History—Maronite Christians—Housta—Hospitable Entertainment—Woman's Faith—Visit to the Sheik—The Tantoura—Sit Milheim Shebah—The Family of Shebah—Their Conversion—Convent of Ain Wakah—Spinning Pegs of the Wolves—Ta Borge—River of Adonis—Gebail—Arab Hospitality.

It was not without many pangs that I resolved to exchange all the comforts of the Locanda at Beyrout for a rough, and—although I laughed at those who told me so—a rather unsafe road, in the middle of winter, with a keen air, and a very clouded sky overhead. Already the storm had broken higher up among the mountains, and the noble front of Djebel Sanin was hid, but I travelled for pleasure, which makes a

vast difference; so, consuming my breakfast with stolid indifference to the suggestions of Demetrie, I ordered my horses and prepared for the road.

“ Oudenak Nargilleh, oudenak Divan,
Gibly seiph e gible el Hassan,
Ana bidye oum eru al herb
Illan miltak * Fergenèe el durb.”†

“ Farewell Nargilleh ! farewell Divan !
Give me my sword,—give me my horse ;
I must up and away to the fight.
Curse your sect, Christian, show me the road.”

A *shurt*, or bazaar, or bargain, had been made the previous day for an animal to carry my only really heavy saddle-bag : what else was mine at Beyrout was borne without much bother under two servants, and a boy bestrode the donkey, which was the only new acquisition I had made. Ibrahim was certainly very indignant at being thus mounted, for the donkey had a will of his own which he seldom failed to gratify, and the whole mount hurt his dignity : but, when the road was very bad, he rode my horse, which, being one from the plains, was most unsafe on the passes ; and then I jogged along on the donkey, who, mindful of himself, was most sure-footed. The man

* They insert *narsara* also.

† The Arabic is very bad ; it is one of the Druse mountaineer's songs.

with whom my groom had made the bargain was in due attendance, and brought a colt, of some two years old, to carry the load. On the servants, whom I sat watching from the window as I smoked my nargilleh, entering a strong remonstrance, he assured them that he knew his animal well, and answered on his head (*à la rassee*) for his perfect capability of executing the task assigned him. Calling various persons, not present, to witness to the feats he had performed, the load was therefore put on, and being assured that all was ready, I bade adieu to Demetrie, and departed.

I half believe this man would, had I spoken the word, have thrown up the inn and followed my fortunes: he had served me on many of my former expeditions. As a last gift, he thrust a parcel into my huge pockets, at which I exclaimed, but afterwards rejoiced over at the Nahr El Kelb,—four cold roast woodcocks.

Avoiding the crowded and slippery streets, I skirted the town, passed the mosque of St. George, formerly the church of the same name, and, crossing the Nahr El Beyrout,* descended

* Like all other localities in the East, it is difficult to discover its true

to the beach which stretches six or seven miles away in a bold sweep, until it runs to the point forming the south side of the Nahr El Kelb. The mountains above rise in graceful beauty, thickly sprinkled with Druse and Maronite villages, while here and there a convent rises, like a pinnacle, in strong position; this is the mountain district of the south, which is bounded by the Nahr El Kelb on the north, and inhabited by a mixed population of Druses and Christians. Some gypsies live encamped on the low lands, and I passed the herds of the Arabs, who come here during the winter months for pasture, returning to the plains of Damascus during the summer. Those I saw were of the Jahesh tribe, a wide spread one; now Fellah, and often sedentary; having thereby lost caste as true Bedawee, they live by the sale of their produce—milk, butter, cheese, and wool,—during their months of sojourn here, in rude stone houses.

Ascending the Apia Antoniniana, I passed the carved tablets which have been so often a

name. It is, however, generally called the *Nahr-el-Beyrout*. Sometimes I have heard it called the *Nahr-el-Salib*. By some it is supposed to be the *Magoras* of Pliny; but I assign that name to the river two hours farther north.

subject of enquiry ; from my own knowledge I have no hesitation in pronouncing the first to be Assyrian, and have little doubt that it was originally covered with hieroglyphics ; these are now quite effaced, though probably copies of them might be found in the works of some of the older travellers—the whole stone has suffered severely from the weather. The next is flat at the top, with numerous ogees, running round, and seems to have been inscribed with several rows of figures. On the upper, which is alone at all distinct, there seem to be two figures facing each other, with their arms extended. The figure on the right hand of the observer seems to be kneeling before an altar, the lower portions are totally obliterated ; the third is like the first, but smaller : in all, within the tablet are holes above and below, as if for doors ; on the second, likewise, are holes in the rock as if for the poles of a scaffold or shed ; one figure is even now covered with cuneiform characters nearly perfect. If I recollect right, Maundrell speaks of large tables of rock before them, of these I saw no traces. The third and fourth are lower down the pass ;

they are very much like the others save in the figure, which has long lappels hanging down, but his head-dress, as far as remains, seems similar. The Roman inscription is farther up, and perfectly legible; it has already been often read.

The bridge above is handsomely built, it is the work of the Ameer Beshar, the ancient one having entirely gone to decay. The aqueduct is very picturesque, covered with tendrils and creepers, and dropping a glittering shower. I should be much inclined to doubt its antiquity. Probably it is modern, built for the purpose it fulfils, that of turning the water on to the higher land on the northern bank. The road now leaves the beach; I preferred, however, the hard sand, and followed it, till a turn in the road brought me in sight of the pretty little seaport of the Kesrowan Kafir Djouni. The road here traverses another narrow pass, where the mountain, descending to the water, has been cut to admit it. There are many marks of quarries here, and the chapel of St. George, excavated in the solid rock. Niches are cut in the cliff above the pass, but for what purpose I

could not ascertain—probably to light its narrow width for the convenience of the night traveller.

Passing the village my way turned up the mountains. It was impossible not to feel pleased at the apparent prosperity of this exclusively Christian district: groves of young mulberry trees, reared for transplantation in all the fields; the exterior of the houses and the whole mountain side was covered with them; the richly fruited orange and lemon-trees, the neat inclosures, exhibited a scene which made one feel proud that at last the Christian dared improve. Convents and monasteries also were everywhere, and as I wound my way up the tedious road, for the first time for many many months the cheerful holy sound of church bells struck on my ear.

He who has long wandered where his faith is a by-word and a reproach, where its outward symbols are forbidden, where the Christian exists only on sufferance, can feel what I then felt. Deeply attached to my own, as the true, the only faith, I can yet acknowledge that others are good; and here the sound struck on my ear as the voice of my own dear loved mother would

have done. I sat and listened, while the servants and baggage, unmoved, continued their ascent. Scenes long past seemed re-enacting before me—summer days and Sabbath bells again, the calm of a country Sunday.

“ Is there a time when moments flow
More peacefully than all beside?
It is of all the times below,
A Sabbath eve at summer tide.”

Even the knowledge that I was a sojourner in a holy land, a pilgrim on a pilgrimage, a seeker after knowledge, a traveller, wandering—all could not stifle the sigh breathed for the land I had left, the home I might revisit no more.

The antiquity of the bell for holy uses is undoubted. We read in the instructions given to Moses on the Mount respecting the garments of the priesthood (Exodus xxviii.), it is specified that there should be set a golden bell and a pomegranate alternately on the hem of the garment round about; the use and intent of these bells being to give intimation when the priest goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out. (Verses 34, 35.) Bells also were used in the earliest ages for secular purposes. In the heroic age the Grecian

officers visited the sentries with a bell as a signal of watchfulness. A bellman(*iodonophorus*) walked some distance before funeral processions. We read that bells were used on the camels that took Joseph away when sold into bondage by his brothers.

Their first application to church purposes as we at present use them is ascribed by Polydore Virgil, and others, to Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, a city of Campania, about the year A.D. 400. If for no other cause, we must thank them as the means whereby we gained the tower, steeple, or belfry to church architecture, which, while it confers a finish, is so especial a mark of the building being set apart for the worship of the Most High. Sir Henry Spelman quotes in his Glossary, two old monkish lines, which admirably describe their uses—

“ Laudo Deum verum, plebem voco, congrego clerum;
Defunctos ploro, pestem fugo, festa decoro.”

The deprivation of them was and is considered still a great disgrace, a public calamity.

Henry V. took, as a mark of his triumph, the bells of Calais, and bestowed them on his native place, Monmouth. Probably they were

numerous and rich formerly in the well-endowed churches of the East; but the Moslem hordes forbade their use, and melted down the sanctified metal for baser purposes. As yet I have been unable to discover the date of their use in the Kesrowan, though it is not very ancient, probably; however, it now exclusively possesses this privilege; elsewhere this holy sound is hushed. No holy summons

“Bids the sons of mirth be glad;
And tells of sorrow to the sad,—
Reflection to the wise.”

The province of Kesrowan is the principal stronghold of the Maronites. Except a few Christians of other sects, there are no other inhabitants;* and though they are extensively scattered through the other places, here they are unmolested. Formerly the tyranny and general misrule operated here, of course, but then the people were not subject to the petty exactions and constant personal degradation imposed on those who were scattered among

* The Greek and Armenian Christians of the Kesrowan are treated by the Maronites much as the Christians elsewhere are treated by the Mussulmans. There are a few also of other sects, but too few to mention. The French assert the Maronites are under their protection, from what cause it would be difficult to discover; their influence is very great, and they are generally great haters of the English.

the Moslems and other sects. At Djouni is the bazaar whence the whole district is supplied; and when I passed through it, it was so thronged as to induce me to ask if it was any particular day; but they told me there was the same concourse daily. There is also a soap manufactory, which does a large business.

Up by many a weary turn till we gained the very crest of the range nearer the sea, and on one side our view extended from Tripoli to Beyrout, while on the other a deep valley, wide and woody, opened far down to the south. The smoke of a hundred cottages rose up and joined the thickening mists. To my repeated inquiries of where the village was to which I was going, the answer was "Folk—folk," (higher up—higher up.) The road was execrable; the sun set, the wind rose in keen and powerful gusts; but we reached the village and the house of the gentleman I bore a letter to at last. Spite of a swelled face, he hastened out to welcome me, and without reading the letter ushered me in with Eastern welcome.

The village of Houst^a* is very prettily situated

* It might be pronounced Goust^a also.

at the head of a valley, which runs up from the sea, of which it commands a noble view. The strata of the rock are perpendicular, which detracts from its beauty; but the heights are bold, and where not cultivated are covered with mountain pine. The village is large, and has six churches—for, as my host told me, whenever the people can make up money they straightway build a church—and it is a particularly agreeable village for a sojourn, as there are thirty or more sheiks, or rather families, of gentle blood resident in it.

The change was agreeable from the cold bleak mountain breeze, to a large lofty well-warmed room, and a hearty welcome: the servants bustled about, and placed the divans; and the company, (for many neighbours were there chatting away the evening,) sat upon them. In the East, as elsewhere, people live their best before strangers, and try to show their best to the world, not using all and enjoying it, not really showing themselves as they are.

It is well when it is only the furniture which is thus kept for show; some keep, also, all their manners, accomplishments, and better selves

for public days. The letter of introduction being at length read, "On my head be it to do you all honour," said my host. After the refreshing glass of sherbet, we began a lively conversation ; he asking and I detailing such news as seemed to interest. Nargilleh, coffee, and at last the glass of rakkee which precedes all meals, were introduced ; then the little low table for supper appeared ; my fasting stomach welcomed its presence : a clean cloth was spread, and bread plentifully laid round. The food was capital, fish from Djouni, and the pure dry mountain wine ; my host and the rest sat round with delicacy eating a little to cover the *gène* I might have felt at eating alone ; hands washed, coffee again, and we carried on our conversation deep into the night.

My host, Sheik Youseph Bittar, was a most liberal-minded, intelligent man, and we discussed many questions I should not have ventured on before many of his countrymen. The conversation was principally on the Sultan's expected conscription among the Christians, and many were the conjectures as to the truth of the report or not ; one even asserting the order

had arrived, and was with the Pasha at Beyrout. My host's opinion was at once bold and manly; he said, "We are the Sultan's servants, and if he calls on us, will serve him manfully, but it will never do to put Christians and Turks together. Let the Sultan raise Christian regiments, commanded by Christian officers, and he will have no better troops in his army." At last all retired, and I slept on mattresses spread on the floor; the rain poured down in torrents, and the wind sighed dolefully among the mountains. I slept again, and awoke with the sun smiling, and pleasant church bells ringing out for prayers: it was the sabbath morning. Washing after the native fashion, I sauntered out and watched with pleasure the troops of white-veiled women as they defiled along the mountain tracks, now appearing in bold relief, now hid by huge rocks. They were on their way to church, and seemed here, as elsewhere, to be the principal portion of the congregation.

Woman's nature, more soft, plastic, and yielding, their occupations homely and unexciting, all lead them to be more acted upon by religion: and here, where all are outwardly, at least,

devout, and thoroughly priest-ridden, I counted that six times as many women passed as men. Coffee over, my host's son, a noble fellow, proposed we should go and pay visits to the neighbouring sheiks; we accordingly trudged up, and reached a house in no wise superior to those of the common villagers; it consisted of one room, some five-and-twenty feet long, built of rough hewn stones, the roof formed of poles laid on the walls, bushes over them and thin earth piled on the top; the whole rammed down, and so rendered water-tight. The interior was rudely white-washed, and several hieroglyphics painted with red on the wall; a small hovel at the end where all that was unsightly was put away; at the upper end a low wall of about eight inches high divided the place where guests were received, from the rest of the house. On my entrance, all rose, and the visitors made way for me, till I found myself, after the proper salutations and welcomes, seated next four ladies. The eldest, who was the mother of the others, though advanced in years, was still comely; she was handsomely attired in the fashion of her youth, and wore the tantoura or horn,

now disused among the Christians. They generally say it was laid aside because so cumbrous and inconvenient; but this is not true. In the last war in the mountains some ten years ago, the Druses swore they would not leave a horn among the Christians; the bishop and the patriarch commanded the Christians to lay them aside, thus hoping to remove the evil; the husbands made their wives conform to the order, and took them away, selling them for silver. This horn is inconvenient, no doubt, for it will hardly be believed, it is never removed. Warburton aptly describes it as an ornament peculiar to those people and the unicorn; I think there is no doubt it is the remains of the ancient worship of Astarte, &c. Yet at a distance it has a most graceful appearance, when clothed with the white muslin veil, over which it falls with charming drapery. The Sit Milheim (whose house it was I now visited) wore one of silver-gilt richly jewelled; her two elder daughters were also richly clad, and their clothes of native silk were handsomely embroidered with gold; one, however, the third, who like a timid fawn crouched by her side,

was dressed in a plain chintz, buttoned closely to the neck. Above the small but beautifully graceful bust, sprang the slight, rounded neck that belongs to gentle blood, scarcely seeming strong enough, though admirably proportioned, to support the lovely countenance above. Never could painter in his inspired moments have conceived a face of more bewitching loveliness : it was the embodiment of our ideal of Eastern beauty. These daughters, and two sons, composed the family of my hostess.

The Sit Melheim Shebah is the widow of the Ameer Abdallah, whose eyes were put out by the order of the Ameer Beshir, for a rebellion he raised against him during the time that Ibrahim Pasha held Syria ; the Ameer Beshir likewise confiscated the whole or great part of his property. On the defeat of the Christians, the Sit Milheim, then a widow, fled to the Kesrowan, from the more southern mountains, where she formerly resided, and has lived here in comparative poverty ever since : her claims, if properly pressed, might lead to restitution of the property to her sons. The time expired in a breath in such a presence, and the

vision was soon flown. I paid many other visits, and in all the houses was received with warm and grateful hospitality. A ruined convent was placed at my disposal during the summer months, if I would reside there, and a promise made that sufficient rooms should be repaired for my reception. Coffee, sherbets, nargillehs, numberless repasts, and we again sat late, while the wind howled and the storm raged without. In fact, the next day the noon had long passed before I could get away, and then the memory of that vision haunted my mountain-road.

The family of Shebah are descended from the sheiks of the Nejid tribe of the Mar Zoom, who boast that they, from time immemorial, have intermarried with the tribe of Koreish, from whence the Prophet sprang. At a remote period, not improbably on the first Arab invasion, they settled at the village of Shebah, in the Haoran; called thence to rule the mountains, they adhered to the Mussulman faith till the late Ameer Beshir became a Christian for political purposes.

Many of the family are said to have been Christians for many years previous, and it is

even stated the conversion was a matter of conscience; but this I should doubt. Several of the older men did not change, and of two branches, those of Hasbaia and Kashia, none of the members did. In several, the parents adhered to their old faith, but allowed their children to be bred up as Maronites. There was not much conscience in this. The conversion has been, so at least it is said, fatal to their purity of blood; and the type of face peculiar to the Maronites, and borne by their priests, has superseded the finely-cut features and well-knit limbs of the Arab. The family of Shebah is allowed by all to be the most ancient noblesse of the mountains: all others kiss the hand of the youngest Ameer of their race: even the haughty Druse sheiks pay them this homage. At present that the Ameer Beshir is no longer in power, they have little or no real influence. As the property is divided among all the sons, many Ameers are poor to beggary: each is Ameer—each too proud to work in any way. There is one who has only 8*l.* a year; some of the branches are rich, but the generality are far otherwise.

Though thus now a used up race, as Napoleon said of the Bourbons, and retaining few of those qualities which when possessed cast such a bright lustre over antiquity of birth, they are still as proud as when they roved the Desert. No defeats, disgrace, or alarm can rouse them from their dream of pride, and they firmly believe no present degeneracy can rob them of their fame.

The Beit Shebah, the house of Shebah, has this left, this last rag of their once gorgeous robes. They will marry with no other (they have allowed a marriage or two with the Beit Bellemma); and gloss over with this spirit their rent fame and fortune. During my stay at Gousta (it is pronounced Hhousta),* I saw the school and convent of Ain Wakah; it is an imposing looking building of vast extent; its school, and the education afforded, deserve more particular attention.

And now the road! To be exchanged for pleasant company, it was well fitted to show the contrast—a steep descent. We wound and

* *Gusta*, or *Hhousta*, contains 1000 houses, 6 convents, 9 churches, and one Armenian church, now closed, as there are no Armenians resident in the village.

turned like a hard pursued hare. Above half-way down we came on the pretty village of Sahel,* embosomed in lemon trees. We had passed numerous convents on our way, and fell as it were on the soft gardens that surrounded the village below. The country was rocky and barren till we reached the high road, about a quarter of a mile above the beach. A little further on passed two rude pillars standing, and two lying down, called the Spinning Pegs of the Wolves. I said to my informant, "Why of the wolves? Surely you mean of the giants." "No," he said; "if there were giants, Ya sede, then and other strange things, why should not giant wolves have employed themselves usefully? God forbid I should alter the story, or tell you what is not strictly true." In half-an hour more, passed a bridge of one noble arch, built of huge well-fitted stones. The bridge is called the bridge of Maha Mil Tain, over the stream of that name, now dry. By it were two large dekkans or shops; but spite of the threatening rain I pressed on—passed the

* The plain.

Borge el Assayebe, the first of the towers I had yet passed. It is a square two-storied building, and well placed for the use tradition assigns it—a telegraph along the coast. The people of the country say the Empress Helena on her journey south from Constantinople to discover the true cross, built these towers at equal distances along the coast, so as to telegraph the news of her discovery. The road round the Wattah Sillan is over the solid rock, and the now pouring rain made it dangerous and slippery beyond measure.

I was glad at last to put up at a mean hovel in the fishing village of Ta Borge. As I entered the wretched place two men were crouching over the lamp, pounding up a mess of garlic, lemons and walnuts. However, we were soon merry over a bottle of mountain wine. My two friends were the custom-house officer and the salt contractor, and we passed a chatty evening. They principally dwelt in marvellous stories of hidden gold and of the enormous ruins found at Ta Borge: they seemed to extend from the tower to the house I was in. Then came a tale of the Ameer

Beshir, who sent a magician to take the gold from the tower I shall pass to-morrow; and he came, and by his art the tower revealed its long stored wealth: but here his art failed; he might not take it, and there it remains to this day. I was a-foot before the sun, which made a murky ill-tempered appearance: in an hour reached the Nahr Ibrahim, a large fine stream, which I crossed by a fine bridge of six arches, rolling with muddy water to the sea. My romance could not see it red, which it ought to have been, according to the fable. However, the pale flowers of Adonis blossomed there in masses, and the rushes still moaned a funeral note for him whom we are told all nature mourned. The boars in the valley, above seem, if the stories told me of them are true, still to be ready like their ancestors to slay another Adonis, if he ventures to attack them, which the natives of the present day dare not do.

Passed a large sort of reservoir, which the natives call Ayn el Birke, though it did not seem a well. The low rocks which line the beach, or rather form it, are here cut into

salt-pans. Proceeded along a broad plain stretching between the mountains, which here recede further back ; the whole plain well cultivated ; the Kesrowan ends at the Nahr Ibrahim, and the Djebel Gebail begins. Another half-hour, and we crossed over a river which has formed for itself a bed beneath the rock. A little further, in some corn-fields near the beach, stands the Borge el Haish: it is square, and of two stories. The upper one, which I could not reach, contains a chamber within the chamber formed by the walls. The lower room is vaulted, and the whole seems of the Byzantine style. Over the low door way is a small carved piece of marble ; but it merely contains a carved scroll. Passed several other streams, the Nahr el Fidar, or Birte, for both names were given ; though the latter word is applied to any stream which flows from rain and not from springs, running only after storms. And then at last into Gebail ; put the horses up at a large khan outside the town ; dismissed my Gousta guide, a fine lad of eighteen ; and set off to see Gebail. I had brought a letter for one of the principal men, who received me

most kindly, escorting me over the town, and showing me all it possessed worthy of note. He would not, however, permit me to move till I had done ample justice to an excellent Arab breakfast, graced by the presence of his very pretty sister.

CHAPTER II.

Gebail—Extensive Ruins—Antiquity of Gebail—Batroun—Situation of the Town—A dirty Englishman—Journey to Latakia—Residence of a Robber Chief—Ascent of Djebel Shakkey—The “Face of God”—Road to Tripoli—Gardens of La Moon—Tripoli—Aqueduct of Brins—Turkish Burial-ground—A Female Lounging-place—Beauty of the Women—The Kadisha—Convent of Dervishes—The American Consul—Eastern Guards—Pond of Sacred Fish—Arab Encampments—Lady Hester Stanhope—Anecdote of Sir John Moore—Village of El Hah—Tartousa—The Thief detected—Court of Justice—Practise as Physician—Kalat el Merkub—Banias—Different kinds of Bread—Djebele—Arrive at Latakia.

THE Moslem town is situated on a spur of the Lebanon that runs here down to the sea, walled on three sides, the sea-face alone being opened ; the walls are patched with modern ill-built repairs, defended, at certain distances, by plain square towers. On one of these, the newest one there, is a rose carved on stone, but it seems rather added, than made for the building. The half of the modern town is built outside the walls, while two-thirds of the space within is occupied by gardens ; its whole present

inhabitants amounting to about 300 Mahometans, Maronites and Greeks, employed in the coasting trade. Except a great number of huge shafts of pillars lying about, I saw no ruins. The castle, which being held by some Arnoots for Ibrahim Pasha, the English battered about, is a huge rambling pile ; the three lower courses, of huge stones with a beading round them ; the upper parts repaired at various later periods. Three under-ground passages run from it to a considerable distance, one to a postern on the rock by the sea, another to a spring. The vaults underground are large, and it has a deep well. From a stone now built into the wall, I copied the inscription. On several of the large stones in the lower courses is the six-pointed cross, well carved.

As I sauntered about the town, I said aloud, in Arabic, “Curse these people : why do they use these columns in such a way ?” (They are built into the wall.) “Well,” said a Turk, “I curse them, too, for making them so large ; had they been smaller, we might have put them to a hundred uses.” The Mina is a small cove, made and protected by a reef, on which are the

the remains of a castle. I counted two hundred and seven shafts of columns lying about. The water within, is so very shallow that, ere many years, the small vessels engaged in the tobacco trade, will find it difficult to come in and go out. There is a large and solid Maronite church which has a dome, a perfect Moslem *kubbé*, attached to it; a badly carved architrave, now on the ground, was the only ornament. I should not assign to any part of it a great antiquity. Had it, as I have somewhere read, been built in the fourth or fifth century, it would have been taken possession of and converted into a mosque. Gebail is an ancient and has been an important town. It is mentioned, (Joshua, xiii. 5) as the sea boundary on the north of the land the Lord would give unto Israel. It furnished workmen to Hiram in his preparation of the materials for King Solomon's Temple; it furnished caulkers to the Syrians. If it is the Byblus of the ancients, and the text quoted above would lead one to believe so, it was the birth-place of Adonis—that loved one of the queen of love. Here his father had a stately palace, and the city afterwards became famous for the worship

of Adonis and the temples it raised to his honour.

It surrendered to Alexander at once, on his southern march, though its king was actually serving in the fleet of the enemy. It was taken by the Crusaders, of course, and shared the same fate as the other cities of the coast. Benjamin of Tudela mentions it as touching on the country of the Assassins, the modern Ismaylees. I was on the road again shortly after noon. The mountains beyond Gebail change essentially in their character: they are lower, more rounded, barren, and rocky; barely admitting of pasturage for the few flocks of Arabs who graze their cattle about them. Those whom I met were also of the Jahesh. Passed a ruin apparently modern, and, in four hours and a half, arrived at Batroun—the antient Botrus.

As I rode through the town, a man offered me the hospitality of his house, and I was soon settled in a comfortable room. While the few necessaries for dinner were preparing, I walked with him about the town; it presents an appearance of much prosperity—if I may judge from the fact that many houses are building.

The town stands on the plain on the north shore of a small bay ; there is a cove also to the north, sheltered by it and a reef ; there are two large massively built ruins, one a khan, and the other now used as separate dwelling houses, and a ruin of a church : this latter is little more than a mass of stones ; the only name I could get for it was Saide, which means literally “ sacred.” While I was standing there, several passers by reverently kissed a corner stone still standing. Another called it Sahita Saiha, but none seemed to know exactly why. There is a curious wall, made by the rock within having been quarried away ; and, at last, a long wall is left between the sea and the town on the east. The rock in other places has been, here and there, fantastically left. There is a curious species of reservoir outside the town to the west ; but the cold warned my fever-shaken body to fly to the house, so I was unable to examine it. Numerous visitors dropped in, and I was called on to value several articles they had, such as watches and knives.

Except a few, in fact three houses, the population of Batroun is Greek in religion, and all

seem comparatively well off. It is in the district of Beled Batroun, which extends from the northern boundary of Beled Gebail, at the Nahr el Medfour, to the Nahr el Jowase; it is governed by a sheik under Ameer Hyda Jamad, who is the hakeem (governor) of the Kesrowan, Gebail, and Batroun districts. On the Point, north and west of Batroun, stands another of these lonely beacons, the Borje Salaata. In the morning, while the horses were preparing, I was shown a stone, which was in a garden, and copied its inscription. I was told of several other inscriptions, but the accounts of them ended, when one asked where, with “Baeed, Baeed, Baeed, Kateer;”—“a long way, a long way, a long way, very far off indeed.” My landlord told me he had had one English lodger before—“He was, Ya sede, the dirtiest man I ever saw.” Now, when one considers that these natives never wash but once in three or four months, when they go to the bath, imagine what this Englishman must have been to have gained such a reputation.

Batroun to Latakia.—After leaving Batroun the road lies along the plain inland, so as to avoid

the Rias el Shakkey, which lies at right angles to the ocean, or W.N.W. and S.S.E. The plain is well cultivated ; having irrigation, it yields abundantly without much labour. On the left of the road lies a branch of the Nahr el Jowsee ; the whole property, between this and the foot of the Djebel, about a mile broad and five or six long, belongs to the convent of Hammath, formerly Baikad Eunan. It consists of mulberry groves and fig forests ; the figs, however, are not of a fine quality ; and, as here and throughout the mountains they dry them badly, the price they fetch is small. Along the side of the road run the ruins of an aqueduct, said to have conducted water from a spring in the mountains to Batroun.

The valley we now enter is flanked on one side by the ridge of Djebel Shakkey, where it abuts on the mountains, and where the mountains themselves recede. The valley of the river is very picturesque ; rude rocks and stately heights, clothed with myrtle, till their rude windswept tops give growth but to the pine. A turn in the road presents, as a centre piece, a low verdure-clad isolated rock ; on the summit of

which, almost unruined, stands the Castle Mezaheila. Passed over a high-pitched, half-ruinous bridge, and, sending on the baggage, proceeded in company with an intelligent native to mount and explore it. On our road we had past a poor ragged fellow, whose hand my muleteer, a man of Batroun, kissed ; the man thus saluted standing and receiving the salutation as his wonted due. He gave me a gracious salute. I asked who he was ; he told me, a Moslem Ameer of one of the best families ; and so thus, though poor to beggary, he still receives every respect that is shown to the wealthiest.

The castle stands on the solid rock, the massive stone-work of its walls following the irregularities of its foundation ; it is built of a yellow stone, and probably owes much of its high state of preservation to the shelter afforded it on all sides by the mountains. It is admirably placed for a robber chief's residence, commanding the only two passes to the southern coast and the valley behind, while the mountains in the rear would, if beaten, secure a retreat to more distant fortresses. The rock is about ninety feet high and about five hundred

feet in circumference ; a flight of steps runs up on the northern side ; it contains a small court and numerous small rooms, but no style, sign, or mark by which its origin can be traced. Some traveller had written his name upon it, which was all I saw.

After examining it and poking into every room, we descended and had coffee and pipes under some fine ilex. They sheltered all M. De Lamartine's company, tents, horses, &c. ; they are fine trees, but would not be so kind to any body else I think. Remounting our steeds, which had broken loose and indulged in a furious combat, we commenced the ascent of Djebel Shakkey. It is long and wearisome, but my companion was very amusing. He had known Daoud Beg, and related many stories about him ; then he knew or invented robber-tales and murders, which lasted till we were at the bottom on the other side. The mountain is principally of chalk, so wet with the recent rains it was very slippery work, and the poor horses, even though lightly loaded for speed, fell frequently. From the north, the Rais or Rass, is a fine imposing point, and well deserves

the title Strabo gives it of το τοῦ Θεοῦ προσωπον, or the "Face of God." * He speaks of it as the end of Mount Libanus, and is correct, inas-much as the mountains to the north are not properly Djebel Libnan; though the name is used by Franks to express the mountains even as far as north of Tripoli: but north of Gebail they are seldom so designated. This is a curious fact, that town being the northern boundary also of the kingdom promised to the Children of Israel (Zach. x. 10); the latter text hardly bears me out in this, but it shows that they are to possess these mountains: and the text I have quoted before, with regard to Gebail, bears me out in mentioning this as their limit.

The mountains immediately behind the Rass are inhabited by Mussulmans, and the two large villages of El Hash and El Herry may be seen from the road crowning the height above: the former has many sheiks resident there—behind, rise the nobler distant mountains, now deeply swathed in snow. Under the shelter of the Rass on its northern side is a small cove, the

* Strabo, lib. xvi.; Pomp. Mela., lib i. cap. 12.

Bain Mina Hammeth, much used for shelter by the coasting vessels who take refuge there. It is famous for its fish, which is much sold about the country during the long fasts of the Christians. On the north of the promontory, well placed, and commanding a noble view, is the large Catholic convent of El Shakkey, embedded in the mountain forest; it is a fine object; at present it is occupied by but seven persons in all, though it has large revenues drawn from the sale of the charcoal and wood of the forest around, which is their property.

The road now lay over a broad plain at some distance from the sea; passed several marks of quarrying in the rocks, and even some remains of works. Having crossed a point inland, opened Tripoli, which, with its white houses, lay sheltered under the mountains. I visited some curious caves, but believe what is artificial in them is made by the Arabs, who enclose their flocks in them during the night. Passed on the right of the road some masses of stone; there are two of them, each consists of three separate stones, one placed on the top and two upright,

below. The two upright have a niche cut out, so the three form a niche. There were also the remains of a platform and several other ruins; it is called Kalaat Sacroon. I afterwards found there was another road above, better than the one I followed, but I had taken one servant, and pressed on before the guide. The one I followed was a slab of rock, and slippery and dangerous to a degree; riding a hot horse who disdained the regular holes, I had three very severe falls, horse and all, the brute getting worse every time, from rage and fright.

In an hour before reaching Tripoli, I passed through the pleasant gardens laden with oranges and lemon, called Le Moon; it has a large Greek convent; and then over the Kadisha, at a ford near were the remains of a bridge, now totally ruined. On my left was the Kontared el Brins, over which tradition says Ameer Youseph rode; it is a narrow plain aqueduct, with nothing of architectural beauty. Passed a magnificent grove of old olives, galloped over the sands, and was soon at the house of our consul, Mr. Catziplis, who received me with hospitality.

Tripoli, (Trablous of the Arabs,) the Three Cities of the Greeks, is situated under a low spur of the mountains, while a plain stretches before it, narrowing gradually till it ends almost in a point, on which is built the *Mina* ; this term essentially Levantine, has gradually superseded any more ancient name that the village may have possessed.*

The foundation of the original town of Tripoli I cannot find, but it appears certain it received its name from the colonies, one of Sidon, one of Tyre, and one of Aradus, which, settled nearly on the same spot, as their towns swelled, joined, and formed one which thus from its triple founders, received its triple name. From the position of the towers, the former town probably extended from the base of the mountains to the shore, and as the lion passant was only said to have been on one, and was not seen, perhaps we may yield them also a higher antiquity than the time of the Crusades. These and the castle form the great sights ; the latter was blown up and mostly destroyed on the retreat of the Egyptian troops, but has since been well restored.

* All seaports are now called *Minas*.

The aqueduct of the Brins or Prince, was probably an erection of the crusading kings; Siculus mentions Tripoli as the most famous city of the Phœnicians, where their senate met and conducted all the weighty affairs of the nation. In more modern times it has passed through all the vicissitudes usual to eastern cities; it has peculiarly suffered by modern insurrections, not only of governors, but by the feuds of the different privileged classes of Mahometans. It is now comprised in the Pashalic of Bēyrout, and governed by a governor, kaimakan (properly colonel), who receives his firman from Constantinople direct, but is under the Pasha.

After a short rest and several visits, for I had by my kind friends at Beyrout been furnished with several letters, I sallied out to see the bazaars; they are large and handsome, and the workmen are famous for their silk-work, in fact, above all the other natives of Syria. I was much struck also by the well-worked doorway of a bath, newly finished; there is a chain worked in stone, excessively well executed; over a now dry fountain, I observed a chalice carved, but partially effaced. In the Turkish burial-

ground I saw also the tomb of the man executed about a year since for saying the sister of Mahomet was what she ought not to be. He had, it appears, a quarrel with another man, and in his passion thus blasphemed the sister of the holy Prophet; he was taken before the *cadi*, a fanatical man, who, on two Mussulmans bearing witness to the fact, sentenced him to death, the case was referred to Stamboul, and the order came to carry it into execution. Amidst the hootings and curses of his fellows, he was dragged forth, and there, near where he now lies peaceably, his head was cut off. He had fled for refuge to the commandant of the troop, who would not yield him up until peremptorily ordered to do so by the Porte; his widow, faithful through his disgrace, unmindful of his most abhorrent crime, had on the day I was there, put fresh myrtles on his tomb. The inscription was pretty, it said—"Think not he sinned more than others: the bad words he spoke and died for, were from the lips of the devil; his heart was pure and good." He has a handsome tomb.

The burial-grounds are very large, this may

bespeak rather the extent of the former population, than the unhealthiness of the place. No where have I seen such tending of the dead; the whole was a mass of myrtle; over many tombs mat houses were built, over some, tents were pitched, and over several, houses or else walls with a door, were erected, while within were trees and flowers. From this, are we to judge that woman's love is fonder, truer, more durable, less fickle at Tripoli, than elsewhere? that here they love—as fable oft relates, to the last? or is it that here, as elsewhere, they love gossip as much, and secret gossip perhaps more? The tombs are one of the favourite lounges of Turkish women; here they come and sit unveiled, and talk and make kief. It serves as a pretext.

I entered the large mosque: probably as I wore a tarboush, and spoke Turkish to my guide, a negro kavais of the Pasha, they took me for a soldier; however, none seemed surprised. It was formerly a Christian church, and the roof is supported on columns; Corinthian capitals have been placed on the top of plain shafts, a band of iron holding them together;

the outside is plain, and probably has received many modern additions. Visited the principal khan, a large airy plain building, used as a soap manufactory, and on my return paid a visit to the gentlemanly and intelligent American consul: found there a rare collection of beauty; his sister and wife are eminently handsome, and there were other visitors. Their dresses were splendid; to me the Arabic ladies' dress presents all that is most eloquent; there is a romance in its rich folds, and enchantment in the gay colours, always so well chosen, so admirably contrasted, and such a mystery in the veil that if they would not grow old, or would do so gracefully, they would be perfection. Passed a delightful evening with our consul and his family, of whom I cannot speak too highly, and then—oh! comfort of comforts!—retired to a bedroom, a European bed-room, and he who has travelled as a native in the East, can alone understand its luxury.

Tripoli is said to be very unhealthy, or rather particularly infected with that curse of the East, the fever and ague. This must be the case, as the whole town is environed with

orange groves and lemon plantations, which require frequent irrigation. There are also low plains, which are swamps during many months of the year, though modern drainage has much improved this; it was severely visited last year by the cholera, and lost, I think my informant said, three thousand souls. It mentions in Kelly, that the Kadisha is the soul of the town, and the inhabitants delight to call it Koochork-Shams, or Shams-el-Jareer.* The Kadisha flows through the town, and sometimes, very much to the disgust of the inhabitants, overflows the town. It looks as dirty a stream as one would wish to see, and "the little Damascus," a name bestowed on every other town in the East, they repudiate entirely; saying they are *Assen min Shams*, better than Damascus. In the early morning, the consul's son, Alexander (Iscander), and myself, examined the walls of the rooms on which each traveller has engraved his name. The present consul, or consular agent rather, and his father, originally natives of Corfu, have held the post for eighty odd years. It was curious that with the father I conversed in

* "Little Damascus." The first is Turkish, the other Arabic.

French, with the son in English, neither being able to understand what I said to the other. The dates of passing travellers thus engraved on the wall extended as far back as 1703, for the house had previously been occupied by the English consul, an Englishman, buried in a convent, some hours off, where he died. Among the names I saw none known to fame.

We left the house early, and crossing the Kadisha, proceeded through the Turkish quarter, always, *par excellence*, built nearest the castle, up the valley of the Kadisha, which is here very picturesque. A quarter of an hour's walk, amidst mulberry groves, with a charming view opening before the noble mountain forming the back ground, we reached the convent of the Dervishes. It is exquisitely situated, and water, pure, fresh, cool and limpid, jumps and frolics all about it: did I not know and feel in every limb the cold chill of the fever, I should say it was a paradise. The convent is now going to decay, but is nicely laid out in kiosks and leewans. We were disappointed of a dance we expected to see, for the dervish had suddenly left; one only now remains, but he

lives not in moody solitude, for his wife and family are there ; and his little daughter, all lovely and coquettish, must attract many lovers. She ran off from us, but sprang back to take the bon-bons I carry to conciliate all with ; on our return the day was passed in visits, coffee, nargillehs, sweetmeats, rakkee.

Dined and passed the evening with the American consul, and at noon on the following day, set off on my road. Seeing a horse and wishing to buy one, I asked the man what his price was, he said “two thousand piastres.” I said, “Some horses are cheap here ; he has no blood, is a *gadeesh* (a common one), and is not worth more than eight hundred.” “Wallah ! (O God !) Ya sede, you want to buy a horse like an Ibn Arab,” meaning as cheap as a native. He, however, soon ceded him for that sum, as it was really, I knew, about fifty or one hundred piastres* more than his Bazaar price.

Two soldiers accompanied me, as the *kaimakan* considered the road unsafe. This is one of the *bêtes noires* of travelling, at least

* Eight, or eighteen, shillings.

for a person who, like myself, hates show, noise, and bustle. Our servants always lie enough to maintain one's dignity; and civility is always shown by the natives. They freely enter into conversation, and if solitude is desired, are dismissed by those who understand them with a word. But take a guard, and the whole is changed; the people then fear you, and you remain in perhaps dignified, but generally tiresome, solitude. Never do the people, when once the manners are understood, infringe: there is a seat, a place allotted them, and beyond that they never come. Since I have become conversant with their language, customs, and habits, I take a rank corresponding to my own in my own land; assert no more, will take no less; and as far as one's habits admit, conform in all things to the ways and usages of the natives.

But to return to the soldiers: the road is declared unsafe, *i. e.* for yourself; armed, probably, to the teeth with faultless weapons, that never miss, and well mounted, and your servants also armed with weapons of your own, almost equally good—they send as a guard

an ancient irregular, mounted on a miserable screw, with one old pistol certain not to go off, and a pipe. On the present occasion, I had two guards, neither certainly badly mounted; one a huge negro, with a useless pistol, but a deadly looking club; and another had two pistols, and a pipe, much more useful. We left about noon, and sending the servants on, I halted at the Bedooweh, a mosque, near which is one of the ponds of sacred fish. Ainsworth says, there were near 2000 fish in less than 100 feet of circumference; these are few compared to Orfa. Here began my troubles, which lasted to Latakia. "Ya Hadjee," I said to the man who came to show me the place, "show me the tablet of your mosque." "Why ask him," said the negro; "Wallah! the Genoese built it;" and so on. I was not permitted to have any conversation; he silenced them all with abuse, and told me, "The Genoese; they were a great people, my lord."

In two hours passed the Mussulman village of Manea; on the plain, about a mile from the sea, in about another, some ruins on a hill, and shortly afterwards reached the Nahr Birdee,

which I crossed by a fine bridge, and halted at a large khan on the opposite side. The road lay along a fine plain, and the mountains above and the plain to the sea are the districts of Djebel Akka; the inhabitants, Ismaylees, Metualis, Mussulmans, and a few scattered villages of Christians. An hour further is the kubbé of a Mussulman sheik, or *wallie*. My two soldiers disputed over its name, one calling it Sheik Ayash, and the other Mulahea.

Half-an-hour : the Nahr Akkar, crossed by a ford above the Tel Akkar, said to be the site of Arca, the birthplace of Alexander Severus. Half-an-hour further, passed inland of me the Kalaat el Ard.* It is large, massive, and but little ruined; probably one of the castles of the Counts of Tripoli, more especially as it commands an open country in the rear. It is now inhabited by sedentary Arabs, who feed their flocks on the plain, which is little cultivated. The country around is called the district of the castle. Passed several encampments of Arabs. The sheik's house, or tent, was thatched with

* This probably would be the *Kalaat Acca*, so strong and so well defended previous to the final fall of Tripoli.

straw. They belong to a tribe called the Semmer. Passed the Nahr el Ard,* or, according to others, Nahr el Keber.† We in vain endeavoured to find a ford. It was some consolation as I arrived, wet to the top of my tarboush with the swim across, to find a Hamath caravan quietly waiting on the other side. They said they had been there two days. “Your business must be pressing,” said a merchant, saluting me as I emerged from the water. “Pleasure—pleasure,” I replied. “Wallah Billah—Mashallah?” “Is it true—indeed?” One servant, who had newly joined me, and hardly knew my ways, refused to cross. We took his horse, and left him. He joined me that night, and promised by his head never to venture to think again.

Met an old Turk, who, after he had talked some time, turned the conversation to Lady Hester Stanhope, whom he said he had known at Damascus. After relating several stories of her, and seeing the deep interest I took in all that concerned her singular fortunes, he said, “Tell me, is it true she came here because her heart was broken in love?” or, as he

* River of the Earth.

† Big River.

expressed it, "because her ring was broken?" This alludes to the betrothal, when a ring is given; thus, when they say "so and so is engaged," they say "so and so is ringed," or also, sometimes, "so and so is written." This is when a paper of betrothal is signed. He said he had heard she was to marry some great vizier, but he was killed in fight. Whether or not, the story of her engagement to Sir John Moore is true, I do not know; but I had no idea before such a tale had ever reached so far, and yet assure the reader the tale is no invention of my own. Another tale of an Englishman and his wife, was related to me while at Batroun: they were said to be living a life of great seclusion in the mountains. Their name I did not know; but I think the man said they were living at a convent.

After passing the river we had a heavy and deep swamp to wade through, in which Ibrahim and his donkey were nearly lost; passed also some encampments of the Semmer Arabs. The plain stretched back, and the mountains bore on their summits two or more castles of which I promised myself the exploring on my return.

Reached the village of El Hah, near which I asked for a cup of water. "We have none." "Ah," I replied, "I need not ask if this is a Christian or a Mussulman village." "Why?" they asked. "Because, had it been a Christian village I should not have asked in vain." A woman upon this brought me bread and water saying, "Let not your mouth curse us, my lord, for inhospitality to the stranger." My guards quite disparaged the castles, assuring me there were hundreds of them. Pulled up at an Ansayrii village;* the women were unveiled, the men fair-complexioned, but with eyes, brows, hair, &c., as black as coals. The head-man pressed me much to stop with him at the village. My guards seemed rather afraid; in fact, had some hours before made an endeavour to stop at a set of tents; but I wished to push on to Tartousa. We now

* There is a constant feud between the Arabs and the Ansayrii; I mean, these Fellah Arabs of the sea coast: for they told me they never crossed the mountains, but winter and summer abode in that plain. On the east face of the mountains, they do not meddle much with each other, for the Arabs do not pasture their flocks near the mountains, those pasture-grounds being the beat of the Turkoman flocks on their route to the southern market. The fights between these former have now dwindled down to mutual robberies; but the races most cordially hate one another. The Arab I asked, gave me an account of them, which delicacy forbids my inserting.

forced our way through a low wood, putting up woodcocks at every step. I counted, during the hour we were going through it, two hundred and seven. Passed a ruined *borge*, and then, taking the lower road, arrived at 10 o'clock at night at Tartousa. It had poured with rain for the last three hours. We had to make the circuit of the town to arrive at the gate, and then all our bawling produced no effect. At last we pushed the boy Ibrahim inside, who is one of those clever boys nature has made, to balance their happier fortunes, supernaturally ugly; he opened the gate, and then ran on shouting "fire," so we entered a *café*, leaving a dreadful tumult and confusion outside.

It was useless at that hour waiting for a house, so a part of the *café* was cleared for me, and I sat in silent grandeur eating my supper, enveloped in smoke and dust. We had an awful fight of steeds: then all relapsed into silence. There were besides myself, about fifty muleteers, Arabs, and Ansayri in the khan. I did not undress, for my bed was soaked with wet from crossing the river, but lay on my carpet, leaning against a large saddle-bag.

After all had been quiet for a couple of hours or so, I felt a hand introduced deep into the saddle-bag at my back. I waited till the fellow was hard at work, when, seizing his beard with one hand, I administered my kourbash most stingingly with the other. He was a heavy powerful fellow, but the part I had seized on was most painfully sensitive. He, however, at last broke away, and by that time all were roused and swearing; my antagonist loudly calling on the Mahometans to avenge the insults to their faith. Knowing the people, however, I called for a nargilleh, which Ibrahim brought: he seems to take a fiendish delight in strong excitements. They now cursed and swore frightfully: their faith—their name, mothers', fathers', sisters' honours—all were involved in disgrace if the insult were not avenged. At last they approached me where I sat, the three servants standing before me, and were going to begin; but this I spared them, by saying that if the thief was not at once given in charge, and the Montselim sent for, I should do wonders; that such a deadly insult had never, &c., &c. The

soldiers had slunk off, but ultimately, in consequence of my servants' bluster, who represented me as a sort of judge of kings—who did not rule, because it was low, or for some private reason of my own—(their bright arms and my numerous weapons no doubt also had their effects)—my slumber remained undisturbed till daylight; when a man in high authority returned with the servant I had sent with my bourydees and firmans, and, apologising for the lodgings I occupied, and for the Montselim's not having known of my arrival, and receiving me with due honours, asked me if I wished to see the man tried. Answering in the affirmative, a short court was held, and about one hundred sound cuts administered, when I begged him off. The foremost in abuse were then seized and thrown down, when I begged for them also. They all mumbled kisses (probably curses) over my hand, hoped "I should live long, and grow fat." *

A numerous company joined to take the

* *Inshallah tekem Nasak*, "Please God, you may grow fat;" a common salutation in the mountains. You answer, "Thank God, I am not ill" or *thin*; the word may mean either.

road, for they all were in a dreadful fright of the Ansayrii. It was six o'clock before I was ready to start. The son of the head-man of Ruad called on me and said he was very ill. As he rather insisted than asked for a cure, I replied I was no doctor, nor, as his spirit seemed so strong and domineering, did I at all feel any interest in him or his health. He now altered his tone, and begged me to do something. "For eighteen months I am ill, and am wearied to death;" but I had no physic, and told him that anything I could do in such a hasty manner was of no avail; but I advised him to seek some Frank doctor. He continued his importunities, but I could do nothing. He said, "If I follow you to Latakia, will you?" "In this weather," I replied, "the experiment is hardly worth trying," and so I left him.

In passing out of the town, visited the long, and now ruined room, called the Divan; it is fine; and I saw on my way out several of the broad Norman arches, and also some pointed ones; these are, most, attached to the Divan. The entrance gateway at the N.W. of the town, the only one to the town, is fine and massive,

and has a rose on the point of the arch, probably of the time of the Crusaders.

The ditch cut in the rock is a mighty work, but I left further examination till my return in more propitious weather. All the flocks of the adjoining districts are driven within the walls at night. The Christian church, without the town, to the S.E., I had only seen in the evening, looming through the night. In an hour reached the Nahr el Hussein; in two more the Nahr Merkeeah. Here all the rest of the caravan turned up to take refuge from the storm at a Christian village, but I pursued my way, passed beneath the Kalaat el Merkab, a fine stately-looking stronghold, situated in a most commanding position, and seeming but little ruined. It is inhabited by Mussulman peasants. The cliffs and rocks along a portion of the coast seemed essentially volcanic, which I have not noticed elsewhere.

On a hill near the sea is another ruined tower, which I was told by a man at Gebele (the northern one) was the Borge el Sabbee.* It is, however, I believe, called the Borge el Boss,

* Tower of the Boy.

and on the beach are several ruined buildings, of large size and superior workmanship. They must either be of the port erected for the convenience of the castle, or perhaps, and more likely, the Paltus of Strabo. Several pillars, as if to assert its claim to antiquity, lie scattered about. There are also some remains of a port. Passing along, we opened behind the nearer range of mountains the village of Merkab, its tall minaret peering up. It is also Mussulman. The natives say, alluding to the Borge el Sabbee, that one small boy built the whole of it: thence the name—the Tower of the Child; and that the pillars strewn about below it are the Almood Bint el Melek—the Pillars of the King's Daughter—she, when the castle was besieged having cast them down on the invaders. The ruins also were repaired, and used by Ibrahim Pasha as a post establishment.

Banias is nothing now, nor could I see in my hasty survey any traces of antiquity in the few half-ruined buildings standing. They are now a huge badly built khan and a salt-house. Passed still over the plain, the mountains north of Tripoli being from five to ten miles back

from the coast. All day we were in sight of the range that forms the northern boundary of the plain, the upper branches they may be called of Amanus, the Djebel Kraudee. The rain had continued, without intermission, all day, and it was with no small relief we entered the half deserted town of Djebelé. The khan was full of soldiers, so I again lodged in the corner of the café, where, over a comfortable *munghall* (brazier) all the moisture evaporated. The people were most civil; they busied themselves for one's comfort most readily. My servant sent for bread, and on the man's bringing it, he said, "My lord, this is bread to eat alone: this is the bread for a spoon: this with cheese, this with leban, this with kabob, this with onions." There seemed to me but little difference, but they assured me each had a separate taste and different make. To me it was all an abomination; when well baked, however, or rebaked, which one's servants can easily do, it serves well enough. In the eve they asked my permission to sing; this was granted, but the singer, on being pressed, said he would not, as his songs were against the Christians. This I had several

times to assure him I did not mind, before he would begin. The air was very pretty, and without the usual monotony and nasal twang. The chorus was a bore: the frequent, Ali, Ali, reminded me of the English sailor's story of a Frenchman's opinion of their songs—"Englishman sing very fine song if there was not so much of the folderoll." He sang of the beauty of the Christian virgins, how large and lustrous their eyes, how soft and glossy their tresses, how warm their breasts and strong their arms in the embrace. Are these for Caffres—are these for cowards? No; for the sons of Islam—for the followers of the Prophet of God." It was all in the same strain.

On the following morning we were off with the sun. Passed the fine remains of the great Roman theatre. Between the arches are now a colony of Arabs, whose flocks are driven into the town at night. Djebelé can never be a popular place with me, as it was the seat of the Bishop Severian, the grand enemy of him, the Saint of the Golden Mouth. It contains a fine mosque, built over the tomb of Sultan Ibrahim. On the former day I had passed a large Ansayri

burial-ground. The bodies lay N.E. and S.W., also numerous *kubbés* (saints' tombs). Passing through the town the road lay along a fine heathy plain. The Rass Latakia had been in sight the previous day, and now we made directly for it. Behind us the Kalaat el Merkab was still in sight. Leaving the coast, we turned more eastward; passed several rivers without bridges; reached the Nahr el Kebeer, which we had to swim, the stupid soldier having missed the ford; and traversing the pass, entered at once Latakia.

On arriving at the vice-consul's, Mr. Mousa Elias, of whose kindness during my stay I cannot speak too thankfully, I found that my servant, sent on before me to prepare a house, had locked up my traps, and quietly departed for his own village; so I took up my abode for a few days with a friend, the one Catholic friar at the convent not being at all inclined to receive a heretic.

CHAPTER III.

Latakia—Agreeable Residence—Hospitable Reception—Secret of the Ansayrii—Mode of eliciting it—Extraordinary Sepulchre—Consternation of my Cook—Practise as a Doctor—My Success—Lasting Influence of Moral Evil—The Works of Voltaire—An Arab Ball—An Arab Supper—State of Society—An Irksome Visitor—Moslem Piety—Want of Christian Unity—A Question of Divorce—Its unhappy Results—Turkish Insolence—An unpleasant Adventure—Its Results—Bible of Bishop Theodosius—Extract from Arab Bible—List of Ancient Churches—More Practice—Kindness of a Woman—An Arab Doctor—Prognostications concerning the Ottoman—Worship of the Druses—Turkish Liberality—Political Opinions—How to deal with Turks.

It was no easy thing to find a house even for one so little careful of comfort as myself, and as my kind friends each insisted on some one house they had, suiting me best, I left the matter entirely to them, and one day found myself proprietor of a large fine ruined house, formerly the governor's, therefore a strictly Mussulman habitation. A couple of carpenters soon put one or two rooms in a habitable condition. My horses lodged where fairy Osmanlees had lodged before, and my servants

took possession of the public saloon. The outer court has a large double door which opens on a small court, in which are three small rooms. A staircase from this leads to a small upper room, through which you pass to a terrace, from whence again steps descend to the main court, descending to the outer door. Again we pass the court and reach a second large door, on one side of which is one of the round-about cupboards one sees in convents. Through this, formerly all the supplies for the house were received, and food distributed to the poor.* Opening the door, a dark passage leads to a large court, the centre of which is planted with lemon and orange trees; on three sides are offices, baths, and stables. The bath, fitted with marble, is small, but very handsome; the main side has six large rooms vaulted overhead, with windows of all sizes and shapes. There is a fine room beyond, and one on the terrace above, showing traces of great former beauty; it overlooks a fine view, and was formerly the governor's most favourite resort. The walls are very

* In Mussulman houses, all supplies are bought by the men, and handed into the women's apartments.

lofty, and, save from the windows of this one room, no view can be obtained of the exterior world. Several gift animals roam about the court and the empty rooms. Abdallah's care has given the place a pleasant air, at least for one who likes ruins and musing over the past. The vines climb loosely about the terraces untrained, unchecked. No retreat more suited to my taste could have been found. My visitors are numerous, including all ranks, from the revered seyd who has cast the seven stones in the valleys of Menah and Akbah; the wild Arab, the sullen Ansayrii; to the priests and dignitaries of a Christian faith. I am regarded here much as Sinbad the Sailor was at Bagdad, after his many voyages, and amuse them sometimes with stories almost as probable; though fortunately the true is generally astonishing enough to render the hyperbolical unnecessary.

The Turks wonder where my harem is, as with them no man of my apparent importance is without one; but they think me a sage from my constant reading and writing. The kind reception I have received from all merits my highest thanks, and the French society was, on

my arrival, thrown open to me. Though acquainted with many Ansayri high in their degree, I must confess as yet to not having discovered one trace of their belief—all my enquiries being met by, “I am of your faith.” I hope I have in one thing a lever which may work. My house being in the Greek quarter, is far removed from most of my friends’ houses. They say, however, “If we love Egypt, we must not think it far”—quoting an Arabic proverb. Nor must I forget my noble dog, who, after most woefully thrashing the bully dogs of the town, has resumed his quiet self-possessed demeanour, and obtained proportionate respect.

An Ansayri assured me to-day they never taught their religion to their women. “Would you have us teach them,” he said, “whom we use, our holy faith?” The Ansayrii are now, also, from all I could gather, divided into several sects; for interpreting to him several tenets of Zoroaster, he appeared to be struck with my knowledge; they always parry me by “Your faith, my Lord Frankmason?” (Freemason).

Finding these remarks written, of how, at first, I despaired of ever penetrating their secret,

I must own the progress I have made now appears incredible even to myself, and their simplicity also in not detecting my gradual increase of knowledge; but from my first arrival here, my whole powers were turned to this, and, leaving all plan until circumstances opened, I gradually advanced; and now with all truth I may say, that what I do not know, I have but to ask them to teach me. I early found that one deception, hardly justifiable, was necessary; namely, not understanding any question asked me which I could not answer. The Ibn Arab, or sons of the country, say "the Franks are fools," but they are no match for the *nonchalance* and *sang froid* of the European; and gradually I whetted the curiosity of the Ansayrii by a pretended reserve. "Ya Sheik, you are happy; you have your knowledge, I have mine: I would say, let each keep what he has got, and let us talk of the weather, the crops, of trade." This persevered in, they could not stand, so they at last gave in and would tell me. Then, again, several sitting close round me, they would talk over a question to be asked me; as if I, all quiet, listless and inattentive, as I seemed,

was not all ears, all tension, to fathom their meaning. For this I wandered as a beggar, endured hardships more than I should like to tell; cold, hunger, and fatigue more than I trust others will know; have been beaten, hurt with stones, yet the result more than repays me. That, alone, without means, without powers to buy or bribe, I have penetrated a secret, the enigma of ages—have dared alone to venture where none have been—where the Government, with five hundred soldiers, could not follow; and, better than all, have gained esteem among the race condemned as savages, and feared as robbers and ASSASSINS.

My morning kief was destroyed by news of the opening of a sepulchre of extraordinary beauty, and covered with inscriptions. Book in hand, I sallied out, followed by a crowd of others to hear the wondrous stories read. On reaching the spot, some half hour's walk north of my house, I found they had been digging for stones, and uncovered a long drain, some two feet deep and five broad; it was now laid open for about twelve feet, and presented stones about two feet broad, five or six long, and one

thick ; the faces of which were covered with ill-written Latin inscriptions—one of as late a date as A.D. 1013—two I copied ; both were roughly, rudely written.

These two stones had been used as the top of the drain or aqueduct ; the writing of the rest was placed longitudinally, reft by some barbarian from their original holy use : they had thus, perhaps, been preserved, where their fellows in their proper places had perished.

On my return, the door of my house was locked, and I climbed the wall, appearing before my lady-cook, as if an apparition ; she ran to the door, found it locked, and the key on her person. “Ya wallah, ya seyde, by God my lord ! how did you get in ?” she exclaimed, rushing into my room. “Through the door.” “It is locked, ya seyde.” “Pooh ! do you think I read books and cannot get into my own house ?” She has held a long confab since with several old dames of the neighbourhood ; but whether I am God or devil, to be canonised or exorcised, does not seem yet determined on.

This morning an old seyde called on me ;

there was something on his mind ; after a long conversation he came to the point. “How did you get through the door yesterday ?—is it a secret ?—will you teach it me ?” Now, kind reader, the fact was I had knocked till I was tired, when, finding nobody would answer, I entered the next house, on to the terrace, and dropped into an outer court in the house I live in. So I answered the seyd—“Your excellency is a wise man ; you have seen Mecca ; you have seen much ;—but the Maugrabees ! Have you been among them ? (he trembled.) The thousand nights are wonderful.” He was breathless ; he promised me an old book he has, which I offered once to buy. “Done,” I said : we joined hands—“I got over the wall ! Hand over your book.” He sent the book, but believes still that there is more in it than I would mention.*

Noon. Returned from the serai, where I have been administering physic to a sick kaiah—the reader may remember my account of the importunities of a sick man at Tartousa : he has followed me up here, a distance of sixty miles :

* I need not say the book was returned immediately.

I advised him then to seek a doctor. About noon, one of the irregular soldiers came and begged I would come and see the man; in vain I pleaded my ignorance, and finally offered to take a Frank doctor, who resides here with me; no, he begged me, me only, to come. I found the poor fellow suffering from the hot fit of the intermittent fever: in vain I told him my ignorance—that I was not a doctor. “But I feel you can cure me; dukkalak, (I beseech you) do not turn from me and let me die!” Poor fellow! well can I feel for him; and, as somewhat experienced in the malady, may Inshallah cure him!

Visitors this evening, and most amusing tales. Again to-day (the next but one), my sick patient sent a kavajs. I prescribed for him again. “Wallah billah, ya begsadeh (oh! Lord God, you son of a Bey), the man is well:” “And will be ill again this eve,” I replied. “If you cure him, our children are yours; he has *heilans** and riches; he will give you all you ask. My friend,” I replied, “I do but my duty as man towards his fellow. I can take no reward; if he recovers it is God’s work.” “Mashallah,” he

* Blood horses.

replied. I have seen him this evening again, and his protestations of gratitude were enormous ; he was again suffering from the cold fit, which I cut short by bathing his feet in very hot water, and making him drink a warm ptisan of violets. He retired to bed quite relieved : the fit was much less severe to-day ; please the wise Dispenser of all things, he will yet be cured. There are now two other patients on my list, all for the same fever, and one pretty girl who comes to have her eyes touched. I have before stated my reason for thus attempting what I feel so little capable of performing ; but imagination is half the battle. These stories are related to endeavour to give the reader a knowledge, by anecdote, of the people.

I remember reading in England before quitting it, a most powerfully written book, called "Use and Abuse." It gives a highly wrought account of the death of an atheist, and the author in vivid portraiture summonses up the spirits, to remote generations, of those whom the atheist had perverted by his speech, deeds, means of various sorts. Alas, how true ! What a moral may be learnt from this, of how

deeply we may act on others by even thoughtless opinions, or words. While visiting to-day, an old man entered, and after the usual salutations, the conversation turned upon the subject we had been discussing, religion. We had the Bible before us, several opinions and doctrines being the subject of controversy. My next neighbour told me the last comer was a Deist, so I turned the conversation, when I found that his notions had been formed on the Dictionary of Voltaire. A consul here formerly, who represented all the powers, and was of a literary turn, kept three scribes, who were employed in translating from French, English, and Italian, into Arabic. Among the rest, this work of Voltaire was translated, and many used to go to his house to read it and other works. Volney was another. He told me, —“Do not think I only hold these doctrines; I could name two who, from the same source, have imbibed the same.” Alas, consul! what injury thou hast done! for surely any faith is better than this,—one vague God, no Providence, no Heaven!

With reference to China, I was gravely told,

there was an idol there which was made by Adam ; every year they put a fresh link in its ear-rings, and there are now twenty-nine millions. Who counts them ?

Assisted, as the French say, at an Arab ball. On entering a small room, with the low divans of carpet, I found the three sides lined with company ; room was made for me next the French consul, the principal man at Latakia. Soon afterwards the music began. The musicians were two blind Turks, one of whom had been the principal musician to Abdallah Pasha, one of the more than half independent Pashas who formerly ruled this country. This man played on a species of harp ; it rested on his legs as he squatted like a tailor, and was a four-sided instrument, the lower side being much shorter than the upper ; it has seventy-two strings, and is an instrument of much celebrity. The strings are attached to pegs tuned with a key. The fore-finger of either hand of the player was defended by a piece of tin in a groove, in the inner part of which was a species of nail of whalebone ; this he used to grasp the strings. The second sang and played on a small drum,

or tomtom; both sang. Every now and then, one of the ladies rose and danced, keeping good time; waving the hands up over the head and in front; gliding slowly but gracefully round. Much persuasion was used by the lady of the house to make the ladies dance, and on some occasions actual force was resorted to, and they were pulled out from their seats, and not permitted to reseat themselves, until they had danced some five or ten minutes.

After this, with various interludes, had lasted from six till midnight, the nargillehs, which had been kept constantly replenished, were removed, and two long tables, of about one foot in height from the ground, spread; these were covered with cakes, sweets, oranges, burnt peas, &c. Rakkee, a strong liquor made of figs, which to me always tastes, from the aniseed with which it is flavoured, like paregoric, was then handed round, and we all hitched up, as a sailor would say, to the table, each depositing his or her useless legs in the smallest space. While the meal was progressing, the ladies at the lower end, who were of a lower class, sang, inviting each principal guest to eat

and drink, praying that it might do them good ; each verse thus sung was finished with the whirroo whirroo, made by vibrating the tongue rapidly while the mouth is covered by the hand, and has, when thus done in chorus, a pretty effect ; it is only done by the women. After this, the song, dance, and nargillehs, coffee, &c., was renewed, till the company gradually dropped off.

I left among the very first ; in fact, as soon as ever I could get away with decency, yet was not off before two, and others told me it continued till six or nine this morning ; but to me, who hardly, even in youth, enjoyed the gay enchantment of a European ball, it appeared as insipid as any thing could well be. The natives have little power of conversation ; there is none of that polished intercourse one has in civilised countries ; the reciprocity of information is not understood ; the topics of the day foolish ; childish questions are their only subjects. The women were well, even handsomely dressed. Like their sisters elsewhere, like woman everywhere, they think of little else but adorning themselves ; and I must own their

taste is good, save that they load their heads with a multitude of ornaments stuck about; however, even that has a lively effect. There was among them no beauty—in fact, it is a rare thing among Eastern women, except when very young. All were as kind and gentle as anybody could wish, and I thank them for their kindness.

Just as I turned round this morning, for a fresh sleep, after the unusual late hours of the previous day, a visitor entered my room, and there staid resolutely for some hours, keeping me a prisoner in my bed. He related, however, one anecdote, which fully removed all the bore I might otherwise have felt. We were speaking of the insurrection at Aleppo, when he said, “Ah, we found here that an attack was meditated on the Christians; we half began to pack up and prepare for the worst, when an English steamer of war arrived, and announced, ‘I come to protect the British subject and the Christians.’ Every creed and race here,” he added, “lifted up humble and heartfelt prayers for the great nation you belong to.”

My patient is cured, his gratitude enormous—he offered me a really handsome horse; it

was sent back with a hope that, if he found any one sick or in distress, he would extend to him, though a stranger, the same help as, in God's name, a stranger had given to him. Proceeded to the great mosque to copy the inscriptions ; a Christian scribe was with me. The Turks came round and assisted me in decyphering them, and jokingly said, "Sedé; get a clever fellow to write them, not an ignorant fellow like this." Was told, however, which damped my ardour, that Franks had come before and, reflecting the writing on looking-glass, copied them. Copied an inscription I found on a wall, the stone had evidently been removed from some other spot.

All this eve have I heard the cry of La, ill, ill, Allah. Oh, there is yet much prayer, much faith, among the Moslems, and must one not accord to each one, who truly and faithfully follows his faith, all praise. These men follow what they are taught, what they have learned from their infancy. We laugh, as many do, and say—"Who, with reason, can believe in a faith that produces, that asserts, so many absurdities?" But, by our standard of thought alone, they are so. Are Mahomet's miracles, his flight by night,

his Paradise, more extraordinary (to one who believes neither) than the five loaves for the five thousand? Are there no seeming incongruities in our belief, that the finite reason given us cannot understand or account for? Yes, I must still hold that the Moslem is often a good and faithful servant of the Lord. In public prayer, in the midst of the crowd, he abstracts himself, he kneels, he prays to his God with heartfelt devotion. Has not the Lord said, “I will therefore that man pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.” —(1. Timothy, ii. 2.)

We blame their fanaticism. Is there none among ourselves? High Churchman and Evangelical; Roman and Protestant; Greek and Armenian; Nestorian and Maronite;—have they toleration? Each, but lend them the match, would fire a pile to consume the rest. To hear the Moslem’s cry to God: his burning prayers—to listen to those continued calls “to God! to God!” yes, there is much of good, much, much, to be admired in their faith, and in their zeal. We vend our bibles as we vend waste paper. Is the Koran treated thus? No instance can be

shown us, where a good Moslem, whatever his distress, will sell his heaven-sent book. They generally give it as a present or exchange it.

Visited, this morning, the kubbé or tomb of Abou Derdah ; it is a small square building with a dome, a wall enclosing the whole. I copied the inscription, more as a sample than for its value, it having no great antiquity. Visited also some curious sarcophagi, a mile north-east of the town, which I copied. Saw also a curious façade, probably of a tomb ; it has the remains of pilasters, but the whole much destroyed. The length may be some thirty feet, but it is too effaced even to discover its intention with certainty.

The Greeks here were, some time ago, dreadfully scandalised. The Greek consul, who was already married at home, finding his help-mate far off, and a pretty girl near who would have him, tried to obtain the consent of the bishop to his union. This he, however, conscientiously refused. Soon after, his duties compelled him to leave this town for the seat of his see. The consul, however, found, at last, a priest of more plastic mould, who, while under the influence

of rakkee, married them, and pronounced a blessing on their union. No sooner did the bishop hear of it, than he excommunicated the priest, very properly, and likewise the consul. The priest asserted the bishop's brother had likewise authorised the marriage, and had received 50*l.* to do so—the fact being, the bishop's brother had done so, having an eye on the consulate. The priest, however, soon found his position untenable; no rent, no fees, his friends avoided him; so he became suddenly imbued with the truths of Mahomedanism, said his “*La illah illah Allah, Mahomet resoul Allah*” to the *cadi*, and became enrolled among the true believers. They rejoiced to gain such a proselyte, a head of his Church, as they declared him—carried him in procession round the town with their holy flags. On passing the Latin Convent, it happened on a Sunday, some boys, at the tail of the procession, threw some stones at the Christians just coming out of church. This, some sailors who were there, repaid with interest; whereon the Moslems returned, and the sailors retired within the convent, and closed the door. The people retired over the

terrace, and sought refuge in the French consul's house. For three days the town was in commotion, when the ring-leaders were punished.

My story ends as all stories do — the bishop's brother became consul, which post he holds. The new-made true believer marries a very pretty girl, and gets his livelihood by mending pots and pans. He came to me, but I dismissed him at once;—the poor consul ended by losing his dearly acquired wife, and his post, and is now a tailor at Beyrout. I have been told the priest had long had a longing for something, and that was to get rid of his wife, — a regular Xantippe. On being pressed to become a Christian, as he might do so without fear, the consuls protecting him, he said, “And return to my wife?” Oh woman, survey your deeds!

An excitement happened to myself also. Walking in the bazaar I met an officer, a Turk. Seeing him not at all inclined to make way I made myself as small as possible to suffer him to pass. This he did, breasting me so violently that I had to grasp him to prevent myself from falling into the middle of the street. For once, rare occurrence, I kept my

temper, and said, "Effendem ; your Highness, your name." This he would not give, so I told my servant before him, in Turkish, "to follow this man wherever he goes, till you find out his name." He now asked me to come to his quarters. "God forbid," I said ; and walked to the French consul's. On returning, having paid my visit, I went to another gentleman's house, where I found my friend and another officer with several other persons. They rose as I entered, when the second soldier put the hand of the first forward, at the same time seizing mine. I said, in Turkish, "Is my hand rotten that you would put it on the dung-hill?" and he slunk back ; and now began the war. They said he had but just arrived from Tripoli, and did not know anything. "Happy fellow," I replied, "for I will give him a good lesson ; but I did not come here to discuss with you. I came to see my friends. Your business I shall settle very summarily afterwards." The Christians looked delighted. The soldier now snatched my narbeesh from me. On my retaining it, he said, "My lord, I would smoke the remains of your pipe. Let us be friends."

I said, "Your compliments are curses. You will have it now. Abdallah, give me my courbash," and the fellow produced a huge heavy rhinoceros whip, mounted with silver. "Now," said I, jumping from the divan, "I would have for my own part waited till I had written to your colonel, who would have settled this, you know, soon enough; but you, a low fellow, have forced yourself into a gentleman's house whom I have the honour to visit, and made his room the theatre of our discussions. Now, two minutes, and you give me the satisfaction I desire, or I horse-whip you, and send to your colonel to tell him why." The formidable weapon, my apparent resolution, the being told by those around I was a wonderfully high personage, all combined to make him promise he would. He offered any apology. I said, "I want but one. You come to the spot where you pushed me, and there stand while I pass, so that those who saw you do the one may see you now do the other." A soldier, his orderly, said "My lord, for shame he dare not. What will the fellah say if an officer of the Padishah does so?" "God forbid,"

I replied, “that an Englishman should submit to what he did to me: but come, you will not,” and we walked out of the house: four consuls, five or six gentlemen, the soldiers and people followed. He stood where I pointed, and as I passed I said (I in vain seek a translation), *Ta faddal*; “before me, pray:” (it is also a welcome, when you see a guest at your door: literally, perhaps: “Step forward, your Excellency.”) The consuls took care the people should know why it was done, and it probably had a good effect. I was warned not to walk about for some days, a caution I disregarded without any evil befalling me. For this, and several other quarrels with Mussulmans, in which I exacted due vengeance, the Ansayrii turned their attention to me. I was not of the religion of the Christians, they knew; for the Christians said I was not: I was not a Mussulman—I was not a Druse; what must I be? and so they concluded I was one of themselves: honest denial was taken as reserve; and the more I held back, the more anxiously they pressed me with confidence.

The famous MSS. copy of the Bible here

(I went to see it yesterday) is in good preservation, and well written. It was written by the Greek Bishop Theodosius, (492 G. Date). In 1727, (G. Date) the Bishop Nicephorus finding the title page almost illegible, transcribed it; at the same time affixing his seal to bear witness to the date he had seen on the damaged page. It belonged to the church of Farous, a church dedicated to St. George, when the Turks sacked that church. Its ruins are now hardly traceable outside the town. A priest brought the Bible to this church, also dedicated to St. George, where it now is. There is another Bible also, 495, which has also had its title page renewed by a disciple of the bishop's at the same time. This is also a well written Arab Bible, date after Adam, 6566. Now, the Greek Church considers this the year 7359; * so it gives this one an antiquity of 793, (G. D.) Subtract 311, and it leaves it 482 years old. A book was pointed out to me, a page bound up with a commentary of the Bible. The following is the translation; I cannot say I

* Among the Jews, 5611; but the Greek date must be taken for this.

attach much faith to it, either to its antiquity, its truth, or chronology:—

“In the time of Mansour el Armil and Mansour, the father of John Cass, the Damascene, the Mussulmans under Melek el Dyher* 300 of Hegira, took the cities of Homs and Hamath. They took the city of Tripoli, 620 Hegira; also Gebele, which fell after a defence of three days. Then Achmed, the son of Melek Naisare, commanding the Islams, attacked and took Latakia, the castle of which, where the Christians fled to, holding out forty-seven years. On its surrendering, the said Achmed ordered it to be razed (literally, ploughed by oxen), and sent the stones to Aleppo, Hegira 667 (1296, A.D.). And I am Roma, the son of Romanos. I was then a Shimasse (disciple, follower) in the church of St. Andrew, twenty years of age. And the Mussulmans took the church of St. John (the Great), and the church of Band Limoon, and all the best churches; and of 650 churches, there were only ten left to the Christians. Here are their names, and the number of priests

* Son of Sallahadin.

in each :—El Farouse, 6 priests ; El Lemmon, 4 ; Mar Androus, 2 ; Mar Milous, 8 ; Mar Georgious, 5 ; Deir Saide, 4 ; Mar Yacoub, 1 ; Mar Saba, 2 ; Mar Tuma, 3 ; the church of Malarka-al-Isme, Saida.”

Of these, five now remain—Mar Milous, Mar Georgious, Mar Androus, Mar Saba, Deir Saide ; two are ruined, and three others have been appropriated by the Moslems. The town has also besides—1 Armenian church, 1 Latin, 1 Maronite, and about 28 Mosques and Moslem chapels. Several ruins remain, but generally appropriated by the Moslems.

My practice spreads: two days ago I was called in to attend the commandant of the troops. On my saying to the messenger, “I am no doctor,” he replied : “Ya wallah, ya beg, sader.” “We know it : but there is none here like you. Pray come.” Accordingly I visited a huge bloated fellow, and common sense teaching me the cause, gave him that night and the following morning a rattling dose. It would have worked a horse, as I gave him all I had left of a bottle of Epsom salts. This morning he offered me the post of surgeon to the troops

and a huge silver watch, both of which I declined. He subsequently paid me a visit, and eat sweets and bonbons enough to bid fair for another attack. But this morning came a messenger of a different stamp, a sleek, fat Christian. He made such a long preamble that I grew impatient. At last out came the secret—a lady sick, the wife of an Aga. I was begged to prescribe. It was truth when I said I could not—it is impossible. I must own to feeling something like an impostor as I went to the house. More demur. I remained firm. “No see, no prescribe:” for he wished me at once to give a dose, saying she was ill, and that I knew how to cure her without seeing her. They delayed so long, I walked off, but was again begged to return. Passed the outer ward, passed the mystic doorway, beyond which none may tread; a court, hung with damp clothes, slops, suds, all about. Entered—saw—a grandmother, a woman quite beyond womanhood, gone to fiendishness. “Inshallah! she must be cured quickly.” Already more than enough of medicine: but one more case.

I saw a man to-day whose kindness to me

has been very great. Meeting an Arab doctor on his way to the house, I on arriving only said my medicine chest was at his service, looked at his tongue, felt his pulse, or rather grasped his wrist, and felt my own—for really the dear man's illness exceeded my pharmacy—then sat down; nor could I altogether pity him, for round his couch flitted the prettiest woman in Latakia. What curious creatures women are. Here was she, with youth and beauty of rare excellence, flitting like a fairy round the couch of an ugly (he *was* ugly, though I respect and love him much,) oldish man, his head bandaged up in cotton handkerchiefs; yet she tended, soothed, smoothed, handed, carried off—did every office of affection for him as gently as if he were a dozing Adonis. How different our bachelors' couch of illness—how my own many hours of misery while travelling came across me; while wandering, sometimes on the bare ground, wet and damp, rolling in agony, no hand even to smooth the pillow wet with the sweat of heavy agony; unattended save by servants, who left one oftentimes no pillow to smooth—having to think, to act, to manage, all for oneself. It

is a sad thing to be ill thus alone. In health all is easy; but even for man, stern, hard, conquering as he is, it is heavy work to have to act while the poor foolish old frame waxes sick and faint. But this is nothing. Kismet—Eugh Allah kismet. Presently the Doctor, an Arab, of great repute, arrived. He felt the pulse. “Have you a pain here—there?” “No, no; none; but I have here.” “Ah, I thought so.” “Will you bleed me?” “Yes; and then to-morrow drink a little *benufsage* (violet roots, used like tea), and, Inshallah, you will be well afterwards.” I left the house, resolved, for the good of the people, to practise medicine wherever I was requested.

Received a visit from Ismael Osman, an Ansayri, the chief of the district of Kerdaha. He governs for the sultan, being under the kaimakan, or governor, here. They are said both to eat a good deal of money, and misrule considerably. They made me the kindest offers of hospitality if I would visit them—in fact, pressed me much to do so. They asked and examined with great attention my Arabic Bible, but we did not speak on any other than general

subjects, the expected conscription of the sultan also, of which they entertain great dread. One of them, the head-man, offered me half his property if I would but live there, and afford him protection. “We are eaten up, my lord. God send the day we fall under the rule of England. The Ottoman empire will soon be partitioned, and heaven grant we may fall under her rule.” They likewise offered me escorts and guards whenever I chose to go among their mountains.

Every day now my house is thronged with Ansayri, who come to beg my protection. One deposited his all, six hundred piastres, with me to-day, to escape an expected eat of money by the kaimakan.

The other day, at dinner, the following story was related:—A Christian peasant, being anxious to witness the worship of the Druses, laid himself in a window-hole, whence he could not be seen. Presently the Druses assembled, and sitting down, recited several prayers; then they produced a figure. One said, “You are God, who made the world; who made so and so, who did so and so. You let the Druses be beaten, and gave them up to the Turks. Now,

save yourself." And the figure was handed over to others, who soundly flogged it. Another was produced. "You are the Saviour, the Son of God. You have brought more trouble, wars, fights on the earth than aught else. Save yourself." And this idol was handed over, and treated like the first. Another was produced. "You are Mahomet, and what have you done? We owe you wars, fightings—our tyrants, our persecutors. Hand him over." And he was whipped. Another now was produced. "You are Providence. Now, see what you can do. Save yourself." The Christian could stand it no longer. He dashed a loose stone down among them, and they all fled. He made a retreat as soon as he could, but treading on a loose rock, it capsized over him, and he remained imprisoned. The next day his brother, working in the field, heard his cries, and forthwith released him, saying, "Thank Providence for your release." "Ah," said the other, "Providence must thank me also; had I not thrown the stone he would have caught it nicely."

I visited to-day Effendi, or the Slave of the giver of Good, as his name means. He

was out when I called, but, on being told of my arrival, hastened back to welcome me. He is one of the only really read men among the Mussulmans here, and we had a good deal of interesting conversation. He gave me—rare liberality for a Turk! a copy of an inscription over one of the mosques; he likewise promised me a copy of that, or rather those (for there are nine), over the great mosque here, formerly, of course, a Christian church. He told me that his family came from Seville, and related several tales of the country traditions handed from one to the other. On my mentioning that I had heard the Moors still dwelt on, and thought the day was coming for their re-conquest of Spain, he added such was the case; but that there was a prophecy that, when Spain was taken, Constantinople would be taken too: so who could dare wish it? Of the taking of Constantinople he spoke less cheerfully, saying, “God knows when! God alone knows when! spite of all, none but Him can say.” He is one of the few who have a good library, and, what is more, who makes use of it. His reading is extensive, and his great

source of regret was, the want of modern literature in his language. Speaking of the conquests of the Moslems, he said "Soor (Tyre) was the only town that made any lengthened resistance to the Moslem arms." It may not be generally known, but all conversant with the Turks will confirm what I say, no Turk will ever rise when a Christian visits him. Afraid now of committing such an insult, they compound the matter by rising before you enter, or doing so to smooth the divan. For this reason, I would always warn Franks to send a person before to announce their visits, as he ought not to fail to resent any such insult if attempted towards him.

CHAPTER IV.

Besnada—Tomb of Ibn Hani—Astronomical Disquisition—Snake-Charmers and Salamanders—Anecdote of a Snake-Charmer—The Ophigene of Cyprus—Travellers in the East—Wig of Count de la Borde—Kindness of the Ansayrii—Visit from an Ansayri Woman—An Eastern Pic-Nic—A Moral upon Pleasure—The Djebel Mountains—Eastern Music—Eastern Dances Described—Lectured by the Sheik—Hostility of the Priest—Preparations for Departure—Seclusion of the Ansayrii—Religious Bequests—Sheer-el-Akash—Nahr-el-Kebeer—Village of Sholfatia—Tenure of Land in the District—Eastern Love of Parables—Religious Discussions—Strange Mode of Exorcism.

VISITED the village of Besnada. It is about two and a half miles from the town, and finely situated on a hill in the plain, and commands a noble view of plain, of sea, and of the varied broken mountains of the Ansayrii. On the platform stands the ruins of a house, still called the Serai, built some eighty years ago by an Englishman,—our consul. Nothing now remains of it but one ruined room and a fountain. There is a large Ansayri village on the hill, and a fine fountain below : this well merits a visit, as its building, a circular shaft, is fine. The

broken ground before the village is extensively quarried, but by a former people, as now they break masses off and square them afterwards, whereas these are squared in the quarry. Rode from thence to view the rising gardens of some natives, consuls of the European powers, promising a better day for the land when men dare cultivate and improve. On my way, passed through the Ansayri village of Demserko, where my querist* was sent from; all the people turned out to greet me, and several at once offered to accompany me on my ride. I galloped on, however; several followed me. A half hour's canter brought me to a little cove, on the shore of which stands the tomb of Ibn Hani, a Mussulman sheik; his body rests in a small room off the mosque, and before it is a large court-yard, with vines and a fountain. The keeper of the mosque escorted me over the place, even inviting me to enter its sacred precincts.

I asked him if it was in veneration among the Ansayri, he replied, "Great numbers come

* A man had been sent to me from this village, to discover if I was really an Ansayri.

here, but it is not to pray: they, my lord, are a wicked race." I copied the inscription on his coffin, which, covered with a case, and swathed in green baize, rests above the ground.

In the evening I passed to our consul's, where a numerous party were assembled. My assertion, on being questioned, that the earth moved and was round, was met with horror. The sacred historians were violently quoted against me: and vain was my assertion that such expressions were of the man, not of the inspired writer; that, besides, they concerned no doctrine, and shook no divine revelations. "No, it was impossible." "You are a Frank Mason;" and their kind hearts shrank from me: so I relapsed into quiet, muttering the words of Galileo, "Yet it moves, it moves." We may thus fix the period these people are in arrear of Europe in all true knowledge; two hundred and thirty-six years exactly, for these were rather in advance of their countrymen.

I remember once, while travelling, one of my servants asked me what became of the sun? whether a new one came every day, or how God brought it back? He was rather a quick fellow,

and had formed not a bad theory to which, he told me, he had gained a great many proselytes. It was, that each day a new sun passed the earth, and then quietly took up its position as a star, where it remained. The rest, for I questioned each, had no idea. One said, according to the Mussulman theory, it passed under the earth; one, it returned at night behind the clouds in the darkness. After the sensation caused by my doctrine was over, the conversation turned on snake-charmers and salamanders, or people who were unhurt by fire. As each story was positively attested I had no resource but nods and smiles. What can one say? Politeness forbids contradiction, and persuasion is a long, weary task. Of the fire-proof people I hope to be able to relate from personal observation, as one has been sent for from his village to convince my unbelief.

One of the party related the following story of what he declared he had seen one night. He was staying with a Turkoman sheik, about two day's journey from hence :—"Among other guests who arrived during the evening was a poor traveller, on his return from some town,

where he had been on some business of his own, to his native village. He spoke little, and attracted no attention during the evening. When all had retired, however, he still remained. The servants asked him, 'Where do you sleep?' 'Oh, anywhere,' he replied: 'Ah, this will do;' quietly seating himself on the fire, which was kindled in a hole on the ground in the centre of the tent. After he had remained in this posture for a short space he shifted his position, and quietly putting a huge burning log under his head, went to sleep." Other stories of them were also related, and one convenience was mentioned; they carry fire in their trousers or caps from one place to the other. Such stories as these were told, and all the company most implicitly believed them. I reserve my opinion till the man comes.

Of the snake-charmers we have stories even more wonderful. They are said to be of a particular race, though others even whose ancestors or parents never injured a snake, sometimes inherit the gift. They enter any place, and adjuring the snake by the name of the Most High, he comes and surrenders himself

at once. Our consul told me, that during his father's time, a valuable mare in a stable in the house was bitten and died: they did not know the cause of her death. Another was put into the stable, and, like the first, found dead. They now sent for a sheik of noted snake-charming powers; he entered the stable, but no snake appeared; he at last got impatient, and exclaimed, "Come, none of your nonsense, I know you are here, come out;" or words to that effect. Reluctantly the snake appeared, and, enraged at his delay, the sheik seized him by the neck rather roughly, on which the reptile bit him. "Oh, this is it, is it?" and he merely licked the wounds he permitted the snake to inflict: this is one of the least wonderful. They are said to claim a descent from a race who are settled near Gebaile, but even their traditions do not go beyond this, though some Franks trace them to the ancient Ophigene of Cyprus. Legends likewise assign to the snake a king, government, and laws, particularly that of vengeance, hereditary and unforgiving, to all who shed the blood of man or snake. For the antiquity of this we may quote Acts,

(28th chapter,) "They said among themselves, this man is a murderer."

The tombs without the town are of extraordinary depth, one, cut in the solid rock, I saw, seventeen feet deep, and also the remains of one with carving of the latter Roman era. There is another at our consul's garden of the same sort. The manner of the poor French gentleman, Captain Boutain's death, while exploring the Nahr-el-Sin, was related to me to-day. He journeyed, it appears, with one servant, each carrying a portion of the luggage. Having crossed the river, he alighted to rest; in putting his baggage to the ground a bag of coins (he always collected them and carried them with him,) rattled loudly. The fancy of the natives magnified the treasure, and they could not resist; they fell on him and killed him; they cut him to pieces afterwards. I was also told that the adventurous Lascaris was poisoned. He also resided here some time previous to the Arab tour he made, and gained great popularity among the Ansayrii; probably he did not do much among them. His subsequent career is well known: my informant

hinted he was poisoned ; I suppose he meant by the English. A story was related also of Count La Borde. While among the Arabs, he saw a very fine mare which he wished to purchase ; while the bargain was going on (another was bargaining, he not speaking Arabic)—hearing a talk, the Arabs thronged round and jostled him rather rudely. He drew his sword : as quick as his ready steel flashed, came forward the rummah and cobba of the Arab ; he was borne back by numbers ; burning with rage he plucked his head-dress, (oh, shade of the unduteous son, his wig and all came too,) and he cast it amidst the crowd. They fell back in terror from this man of wondrous make. “*Ya wallah*, the Caffre has pulled his head off—God help us, God pardon us.” This gave time to appease all anger ; the Count replaced his wig, which had proved to him a better defence than the triple shield of Ajax or the petrifying head of Medusa : Backshish, backshish, and all was forgotten.

Laquais-de-place are the *bêtes noires* of all travellers. Here kind friends acted this invidious part ; no sooner did I think within myself it would be well to make some small return for

the kindnesses done me by the Ansayrii, than up started thirty people of the town, each of whom had a village more apropos, more beautiful, better situated than any other. Some almost proceeded to violence, ordering my servants to do this and that; others eat dirt, and swore they should love me and mine for ever. Some entreated; both my servants and myself, however, received all with thanks, but none with any direct answer. It is necessary to mention the good offices of the Ansayrii towards me, nor did others fail to reap an abundant harvest, I am sorry to say; for less scrupulous than I, they availed themselves of it to the fullest extent: greatly to my annoyance, presents flowed in daily; butter, grease, eggs, vegetables, lambs, goats, gazelles, partridges, frankolin, sour milk, coals, tobacco, felts, cotton; in fact, all that they possessed; invariably a present of thrice the value was offered in return, but not accepted. However, I provided every day burgoul (millet) cooked with grease, coffee, nargillehs, and arrack, for all who came, and seldom fewer than one hundred or upwards fed in my corridor; money they would not receive:

in fact it sometimes went so far that the present was dashed on the ground, because my servants steadily maintained I would receive none unless they received one in return.

One morning the hadjee came to me in a state of great excitement, and said "Wallah billah, ya beg; here is the devil's third wife below; may I beat her?" "God forbid," I replied: "What is it?" He said "There is Abdallah, with his tongue like honey, can make nothing of her. She vows by your beard she cannot receive any thing, and says you are Ali; God preserve you from her words. There she stands naked (unveiled), till my old eyes are ashamed." I said "Pray send her up:" he uttered some invocation to protect me, and she ascended to my little snugery, he discreetly waiting below. She was a young girl of about fifteen, wife of my great friend, a Sheik Hassan. Shouting Allah, the usual salutation of an Ansayri woman, she knelt down in the corner, and said "There are the Christians and the Turks eat us up, and love our gifts; you, one of my man's own holy chiefs, will not take my offering." I said, "I shall be proud to do so if you will take mine."

“ Ah ! ” she said, “ great as you are, you cannot feel for your slaves ; my lord will beat me if I go back with money ; how shall I creep to him ? take it, take it, for his head.” Perhaps it was not his head that changed my opinion, but I took it. The sheiks even ate with me, a thing they would have lost their lives sooner than have done with a Turk, even though it were the dreaded Pasha himself.

Sending a servant and tents, (the French and English consuls sending their carpets,) to the Besnada, a village I have mentioned formerly, we left the town one lovely morning, a gallant cavalcade of some fifty horsemen. The two high functionaries of England and France rode on either side of me, next came sedate Christians, then a confused mass of quiet horses, ambling asses, and petted mules, led by servants, and carrying the veiled beauties of Christian faith. Each rode astride, a noisy pickle generally on the croup, and an infant of tender years before ; their white shrouds could hardly cover the joy at their emancipation and expected kief : behind followed a small regiment of sutlers, for no Eastern lady can move without a cargo of

walnuts, pistachios, bonbons, figs, mastic, &c., while round us galloped, shouted, fired, charged, darted, all the chiefs; also youths, servants, and janissaries, attached to the consulates. Now they darted over the rocky plain, pursuing or pursued, now dashed in our faces, firing, yelling, wheeling their horses, curvetting, throwing and returning the jereed, or seizing the long quivering spear from some less active antagonist.

It always seems to me, our inferiors quaff the choice drop of our pleasures: witness a dull evening, with stupid company, while you hear faintly the roars of the servants. Distance lends, perhaps, enchantment to the view. But so it seemed on this occasion: methought I would rather have joined that gay group, than have marched at a funeral pace, on a very restive horse, even though he was led by two high sheiks. About half a mile from the village we were met by the male population and the music; the two masses mingled tumultuously; yelling, firing, rushing, kicking, neighing, braying, till like two mighty streams, struggling, curling, and conjoining at last, we flowed peaceably on to the village, the music

just before me thundering forth its very loudest notes. No sooner did we begin to ascend the ridge, than the women, who were all clustered on the ridge, joined in with their cry of welcome, the Hahee, singular, or Haheel, plural.* It consists of a short verse, such as “You are welcome, the day is blessed.”

“May you be happy, Ya Hyder Bey,†
Lrihoo, Lrihoo, Lrihoo, Lrihoo, Lalloo.”

We found the tents pitched on the flat, grassy top of the mound, commanding a beautiful view. The minarets and olive grounds of Latakia seemed as if retreating behind the castle hill; before us a varied plain, sprinkled with rich gardens and summer villas, till it met the sea blue, calm, and beautiful; on the north, undulating fields of green, vigorous corn, faded into mountains of every varied hue, nobly flanked by the Djebel Okal, or, bald mountain. On the eastward, is another undulating plain, but again those mountains rise in broken ridges, pile on pile, containing those wild tribes, now

* South, it is called *Zalgootaa*, singular; *Islareet*, plural.

† Such was the name I was known by.

as of old, unvisited. As I gazed on them, my resolve was strengthened to penetrate their farthest recesses, and wipe off the slur which stains the wanderer's name, that we can not, dare not, enter them; the front of my tent, pitched the most conveniently for enjoying the sights, was taken down, the women removed their curious shrouds, and shone forth in all the bravery of gold, silk and embroidery. The Sheik Abdallah now asked if we wished the people to dance, or preferred waiting till the eating was over. First the dance: the music struck up afresh. It consisted of two enormous *tubbils*, or drums, slung by a strap round the neck. The left hand grasped one end, at the same time striking the instrument with a stick with the right. The fellows banged boldly occasionally as they became excited, swinging the drum round in a semicircle, the drummer forming the centre. A most venerable looking man played the *jummer* or fife, rather perhaps a clarionet, with seven uncovered holes, the bell-shaped end inlaid with silver; chains, also, with coins, jingled about it. Another played a similar instrument, but less gaily ornamented. For each instrument

there were two players, who relieved one another as they became fatigued. The drums maintained a perpetual but not ill-timed din, while the poor clarionets, half drowned, seemed frantically to endeavour to keep up with their sonorous notes. The villagers sat in a ring leaving our side open—generally the men apart from the women. Men now entered the ring, a handkerchief in each hand, and commenced dancing. The hands are waved in time, one extended and one resting on the hip. The step looked very much as if the fellow put his foot down, found the place hot, and took it up again rather swiftly. The same trial was repeated with the other foot, and so on. It was varied by certain motions of the loins, that are seemingly esteemed as graceful over the savage globe.

We vainly represented that the townspeople danced well, but we were bored with their display, nothing but the hadjee's whip could effect a cessation. Two women now entered: their dance is not ungraceful; a pretty variety of that of the men. This is called *rhucks*; but soon many joined hand-in-hand, and danced the *aarge* or *delakme*; the latter

name has no meaning, but the former is the motion thus made. Each at the same time puts the right foot in front; then to the left, to the rear; all then make a rapid step to the right, swinging their clasped arms. As they jump, the knees are bent at each step, and the lower part of the body inclines forward—hence the name.

At last the food was ready, and the music led the way to the sheik's house, where it had been prepared: it was then borne forth by men in huge cauldrons, and distributed in shovel-fulls to the villagers. Some took it in their earthenware platters, others in their coat skirts, kneading it into huge hard balls. It consisted of rice and grease. Lettuces and oranges also had been consumed in abundance. After this, dancing was resumed with great spirit till we felt tired, when we left, preceded by the music, the yells, and lurroos of the people.

Afterwards I received a severe lecture from the high sheik for being pleased with such amusement. I excused myself on the score of youth; the last time I fear such excuse may be successfully pleaded.

During my residence here, I have conciliated

all but the Catholic priest; he put me under ban from the first, and the first glimpse of my coat makes him and his caracallis* vanish. He refused me a lodging in his convent, though the only occupant, with some twenty spare rooms, and warned his communicants not to let me a house. This order they partially obeyed, for their avarice, thus authorised, asked a price which amounted to a prohibition. On my first arrival here I was set down as a Protestant priest, come to convert the natives. In this opinion all my responses to their questions confirmed them; my firm belief that our doctrines were those of the primitive Church; my reference to Holy Writ; my constant refusal to admit their legends as right; my whole system, life, quiet, and love of study. After a time, however, they got tired of this, and they now set me down as one sent to raise the Ansayri to revolt and establish an English rule. This gains ground every day; and as I never deny anything they say, why it is an established fact; so much so, that this

* The monks' dress was merely an adoption of the hooded cloak, *Caracallis*, which has now, in the course of time, become their peculiar dress.

evening a man waited on me for information relative to a rise the mountaineers have made, actually asking me how far I intended it to extend, and himself offering to assist me by misleading the soldiers who are to be sent to the spot.

To-morrow, dear reader, I had intended to to have taken my leave of you, among the orange blossoms of my court, but if you will, we will yet journey on, and tread where none of European race have ever yet roamed. I take your consent; the servants furbish up their arms; the hadjee is off to the bazaar, to a secret store, whence he draws *hashesh*; he would die, he says, without it, and feels sure those bookless dogs, the Ansayri, never heard of the holy weed. Abdallah will not be left behind. Ibrahim the imp makes dreadful faces at the old woman of the house, and says, "I love you, but must go." So, Inshallah! to-morrow shall see us on the road. Among the first preparations is a paper, to be left with our good, kind consul, to the following effect:—

"I hereby certify that our Consular Agent advises me not to go to the mountains, as he

considers travelling there in the present juncture decidedly unsafe."

The *tass abou** had set in, and it was folly starting, so the journey was postponed till its three days of reign were over.

"If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou wouldst forget;
If thou wouldst read a lesson that would keep
Thy heart from fainting, and thy soul from sleep;
Go to the hills and woods. No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears."

Nobody having ever ventured among these mountains, there was no necessity for that most intolerable bore, getting up the route. Kelly observes, "Most travellers are shy of approaching this district." Burckhardt spent one evening among them, but gives little information save that, on his mentioning having heard of a temple and people of their religion in the East Indies, they appeared much struck, as if there was something in it. In the first place, they have no temple or building dedicated to prayer; and, except vague stories, do not know whether they have any co-religionists or not.

The United States consular agent had agreed to accompany me, avowedly for my pleasure,

* Sultry weather : that close cloudy dark state of the atmosphere.

but really on a voyage of trade under my protection, and hoping to recover a mare stolen from him some time before. Friends flocked in to bid farewell, and about noon we managed to get off, leaving a servant behind us to bring on the Governor's bouredee, which he refused to give without a letter from me, relieving him from all responsibility about me. We set out, and took a north-easterly course, passing round the Castle hill, much of the property near which is still held by the original conquerors; that is to say, those who conquered the place from the descendants of the Crusaders. They are now in actual poverty, perpetually draining money; their land is worn out. You seldom find a Turk who will expend a para now, though certain of shortly reaping a piastre.

Our road now lay along the plain; leaving Besnada, the scene of our revel, on our left: passed the Sacred Figs: they require the law of mortmain, sure, for among the Ansayrii, pious men leave land either for the benefit of their own posthumous fame, or to some deceased sheik. These fig trees, forming originally a large and fine plantation, were bequeathed by

a deceased Ansayri sheik to the stranger. All may take, as nobody concerns himself about every body's business. They are annually un-irrigated, dying off every year, leaving a lost tract of valuable land, now nearly bare.

Here was a fine sarcophagus on the side of the road, among a ledge of rocks through which the road winds; but the place has a bloodier renown. Here the government generally murder any Ansayrii sheik they wish to be rid of. They can seldom be persuaded to enter the town, even with a safe pass, never without. The Mussulmans, perhaps, may consider the pass void beyond this; or, more probably, they do not even care to make an excuse. The spot is called "Hagar-el-Atrash," the Deaf Stone.

It may not be out of the way here to enter into the subject of the estimation in which this persecuted race is held, both by Turks and Christians. The Turks regard those who believe the Bible and Holy Writ, as Giaour—Caffer (Caffar), perhaps Infidel. This is the name used, the one word being Turkish, the other Arab; but all other sects they call Immamee,

or without religion. The Christians, &c., probably, are as little loved as the others, but they are now strong; as for "these Immamee, these Ansayrii, it is better to kill one than to pray a whole day."

In fact, this doctrine is preached even now : for them there is no mercy, no protector. We halted at the Nahr-el-Kebeer,* and spread carpets, picketed horses, waiting for the kavass who was to bring the boureee from the governor. The river is broad and deep; in fact, but one ford exists for ten miles from its mouth, and a yearly average would give, perhaps, fifteen people drowned in its water in endeavouring to pass while it is swollen during the winter. Some years ago, the Porte, at the petition of the people, sent 50,000 piastres, (450*l.*.) to repair two of the arches which had fallen. The bridge itself was, probably, a relic of better days. The money arrived ;—20,000

* Just above us, the Egyptians defeated the Ansayrii during one of the frequent risings they made against Ibrahim Pasha. They came to the attack with about ten bullets each; so when these were expended each endeavoured to make the best of his way back to the mountains. An Assayrii joined us, helping the servants. I asked him if he was there. "*Ya wallah*, I was; and was fool enough to be caught, and had to serve as a soldier with the Egyptians five years; when, thank God, you came, and I ran away."

piastres were eaten by the council, 30,000 repaired the two arches, but none thought of repairing or inspecting the remainder; so the first freshy washed it down, and the two new ones alone are left. Such is an epitome of all Turkey.

The coffee drank, the horses bridled, we rode on to Sholfatia, a very pretty village, situated on the banks of the small river Nahr-el-Ish, the river of hay or dried grass—a confluent of the Nahr-el-Bebeer. Here my first ordeal was to be passed; the whole male population poured out, my hand was kissed, my horse much bored, half inclined to kick,—was borne along till we reached the open space in front of the village. The women, doomed to toil, all soulless as they are, hang timidly back. Felts* were spread on a rising ground, and there we sat. The spot was very pretty, the flat-roofed hovels, each with an affair like the tilt of a waggon, made of twigs on the roof: in these the natives sleep during the summer.

On either side of the broad but shallow stream,

* I have often mentioned these; they are made of beaten wool, and used by the poor as carpets; by all, for various uses.

lay the young corn ; flocks, bleating and lowing, passed in. The keen air, however, drove us in, and we remained, during the day and night, at the house of a husbandman of my companion's who has a share in the village, and kindly affords them such protection as he can.

The village of Sholfatia belongs to the Sultan. These villages are sold yearly, the purchaser guaranteeing the taxes merely. The buyer of the previous year has the preference., and, on relinquishing a village he has hired, (the same also applies to all other property,) the proprietor is compelled to repay him the money expended on improvements. The hirer or purchaser of the Sultan villages, only pays the amount of the taxes. This is perfectly fair ; but, when a Turk or a Christian takes a village, he frequently never even goes near it, more frequently never assists the peasant with any thing. He only receiving presents of all his rural fruits, and yearly extorting some thirty to forty per cent. on their produce, leaves him besides to pay the tax.

The ingenuity of extortion amuses me ; the taxes are collected at four quarterly collec-

tions. At three the peasant is behind hand, his crops being unreaped; he is therefore forced to borrow from his proprietor, who advances the money at forty per cent.; and he also, for the money lent to-day, if paid next month, extorts the full year's interest. There are few peasants who are free from debt; some proprietors, more generous, or probably more long-sighted, supply seed and one ox of the two used at the plough, sharing equally the profit with the husbandman, who has to pay his own taxes. But the labourer is expected, as a right, to supply the landlord with all such things as fowls, cheese, eggs, milk, leban, &c. The people of this village have lately sent a petition, offering good security, and entreating the Pasha not to sell their village, but to permit them to pay the tax themselves.

After our meal, in which both Sheik Hassan and Sheik Abdallah, the latter a high man—both are in fact so—refused to join, we conversed on different subjects. “Ya Beg, I hear you have travelled far and much: answer me this question; one of our *kadmeen* (high men) asked it, and none for many days could answer it. Two camels were born on the same day

and died on the same day, yet one had lived one hundred years longer than the other.” “The sheik has wisdom,” I replied: “the one camel had travelled; you say truth; your beard is young, yet you know all things.”

They said, in allusion to my visit to Kalaat-el-Sion, “Why go there, one stone is like another, however man may shape it.” Though the advice had no effect on me, my companion showed so many causes why, that I most unwillingly gave up my own route, and we agreed to go at once to the southward. Before long they entered, of their own accord, on religious matters. The women and children, the uninitiated and, most reluctantly, my friend the consul, were dismissed; the doors were closed, a guard placed outside, and* * * *

Some hour or two after we had retired to sleep, we were awoke by a dreadful noise, yells, cries, and at intervals the heavy blows of a cudgel. The consul, tender-hearted, awoke the kavass, whom he sent out to inquire the cause. The kavass found Sheik Hassan belabouring a

* It would be useless giving the reader portions; if he will grant me indulgence, let me hope he shall have the whole of this curious and as yet secret creed.

poor woman, shouting and yelling as he did so ; nor would he desist until he had left her half dead on the ground. I maintained the semblance of sleep, wishing to see the result without disturbance, and thinking, that probably the punishment was merited. The affair over, Sheik Hassan came to the consul and said : “ Ya consul, I have had sad work ; it was a strong devil ; did you see, I drove him up to her nose, but there he remained, long and pertinaciously.” The consul remonstrated against the cruelty. The sheik declared, “ the blows were not on her face but on the spirit ; those cries were the yells of the fiend, unwilling to quit the residence he had chosen.” The woman, we afterwards found, had come some considerable distance to be cured, Sheik Hassan’s power being universally acknowledged.

He told me, afterwards, that the demon which he had expelled from the woman, when adjured by a holy name, exclaimed : “ Let me alone, I am no Christian, I do not care for that name.” He next adjured him by the name of Abraham el Kaled (Abraham the Beloved), and then the evil spirit came out of her.

CHAPTER V.

District of Mehalbee—Caldahha—Inducement to settle in the East—Extensive Burial Grounds—Description of their Houses—Patience of the People—Present of a Volume of Petrarch—Theological Discussions—Ein-el-Sakarr—Revolted Village—Sheik Habeeb—His Residence described—Its Furniture—Polite conduct of the young Sheiks—The Sheiks of Religion—Superstitious Charms—Castle of Beni Israel—The Prison of Blood—Reasons for Non-improvement—Interesting Conversation—A School established—A few Reflections.

ON the following morning we started early, the sheik accompanying me, which no persuasion or force could have induced him to do, except the conviction that I was of the same religion as himself. With many good wishes, we went on our way, crossing the small river in front of the village. We proceeded, south and by east, over a broken undulating plain, but shortly turning more east, proceeded among the lower spurs of the Ansayrii range. In the lower part of the district of Mehalbee, the country was but partially cultivated, and we passed several villages ruined and deserted; the inhabitants fled from the extortion of officials to their

inaccessible mountains; thus Saluerin, a beautiful district that, eight years ago, was ill-cultivated by one hundred and twenty Feddan, (four oxen make a Feddan,) now has but fourteen. Abdul Azzak Effendi's brother ate it; the village spoiled; some fifty houses out of sixty uninhabited; trees cut; all ruined; it was *dumas*—let to him: he has now resigned it, finding it impossible to drain more money from it.

The people came out and pressed us to remain that day with them; "It is our right to-day to have you." Passing the Nahr Shebar, or Stama, for I have heard both names, we entered the district of Caldahha, under the Sheik Ismael el Osman. He is the official of government, but otherwise not high as an Ansayrii. Passed among and over low rounded hills, overgrown with myrtle and rhododendron; these are forbidden by the sheiks to be cut, as they justly think them an admirable cover in the event of an attack from the forces of the government; ruined villages on every hill.

Sheik Hassan proved an admirable com-

panion; he had a story for every spot, and halted at every kubbé. These are tombs of the sheiks; a square room with the door towards the west, a window towards the east: a dome forms the roof, surmounted by a short pole of masonry; an inscription over the door; the whole neatly whitewashed. At each kubbé accordingly he halted, and, as he said, prayed to the holy man to intercede with Ali for me. Passing a ruined mass of huts near a village, he said, “Here, Ya Beg: five years ago that village was flourishing and happy; children played on the sides of the hill, and wise men loitered by the door-ways. Now all is desert, and all because there was a slight difference in their belief and their neighbours’. How, then, shall we wonder that there are small differences between you and me, separated, uncommunicant for centuries? They fled to their own sect in the mountains.”

“Ya wallah, you must marry. Say whom you would have, and she is yours. If you wish it we will bring every virgin in the mountains for you to choose from: love us, Ya Beg; take one of our daughters, show us you trust us: live with us, we will serve you.” The habit of making

every sheik who is hospitable a saint, and raising a kubbé to him, covers the country with these erections; and valley, plain, or hill-top are all occupied. Passed a large burial-ground: the bodies must be intended to be placed east and west. I think the tombs generally, are merely a species of flag, laid flat over the body; a vacancy is left in the middle of the tomb, which has generally an upright stone in it: others have a raised tomb with an inscription: this, however, is rare. On several I have noticed a six-pointed star: this was that of a good man, in whose body the spirit had undergone its last purification, and from him taken up its residence in a star.

The district of Caldahha is called also Kelbia; this is the origin, probably, of Volney's error, that one of their sects was called Kelbia, that being the name of this whole portion of the mountains. Before arriving at the village of Caldahha, we passed a small monument, kept in good repair; on the south side there was a niche for a lamp, cut into the tomb: our sheik told us it was that of a Christian priest. Nightly, he says, a light is seen in

the hole, trimmed and tended by no mortal hand. It burns, has burned, and will ever burn.

We at last arrived at Caldahha, a straggling village, the residence of Sheik Ismael Osman ; he was absent, but were most kindly welcomed by his henchman. I had known him at Latakia, where he had been on business, and he at once despatched a courier for the sheik. His house was in nothing different from the cottages of the peasantry, save that it was larger, built of stone, the interior roughly plastered with a yellow clay. The roof was formed of boughs laid on the beams, over which a cargo of earth is well rammed down : the interior is one large room—posts supporting the roof—one end is set apart, and the floor spread with rude mats and felts : in the centre of this part is a round shallow hole, with a small raised ridge round it ; in this, charcoal and wood are burned. The sheik had a huge bed, a platform of boards with four posts, and a stuff spread over it for a musquito net. Into this it was necessary to climb, and in the further innermost corner of it was his chest of valuables. His

wife, a very pretty young woman, busied herself about, dinner and the sheik himself were announced together.

The conversation turned, of course, on the government, our friend inveighed strongly against the system of constantly changing the sheiks: "What can I do; some one else will buy me out." He forgot the fact of his having expelled the former occupant by the same means: all the people here believe the *tain-zemat harea* a sign of the weakness of the government, and are resolved to resist the conscription. To their prayer to me for advice, I answered that it seemed folly, madness, thus disunited, and unprovided with military stores and money, to attempt it. "No," they said, "we will do our best, and God help us. They have no troops, they eat us up, it is better to die." The sheik bore witness to the fact that many of his people eat nothing but herbs boiled with milk; Can they live on less?

They have for years, it appears, been running in debt; their money for the *miri* or tax on the produce of land, has gone in presents to the members of the council, or government, and the

government had received nothing. They now come on the poor wretches for seven years arrears; another very true remark he made was—"When Ibrahim Pasha was here he was compelled to disarm the natives before he could collect the taxes; and do you think that now they will let a weak government seize their young men while they are armed?" This is much what Ibrahim Pasha said to Omar Pasha, the Turkish general: "You, with the assistance of the English, have expelled me; you have again put arms into the hands of the mountaineers; it cost me nine years and ninety thousand men to disarm them. You will yet invite me back to govern them." It was late ere we retired; our huge host mounted his mighty bed; we threw ourselves on the felts, and, save a dreadful cock, who crowed at my ear all night, I slept well.

Tuesday: up early. As I was sitting outside our host's kiosk, waiting for my companion and the baggage; a sheik brought me a volume of Petrarch, in Italian, the property, he said, of a traveller, who had died among them. There was no name in it, but it was probably the

property of poor Captain Boutain, as he was murdered in this district; and it was here the Turks, at the instigation of Lady Hester Stanhope, wreaked such a terrible vengeance. They cut down every tree; burned the houses and crops. The people of course, flew to the mountains, but even now the district has not recovered the punishment they received: they, however, put this all down to the Turks, not remembering the original cause.

Sheik Hassan and myself had long theological discussions, which resulted fully in his acknowledging me an Ansayrii. We descended over broken, sandy ground, partially covered by myrtle and rhododendron. I asked Sheik Ishmael Osman, who accompanied me a short way, why they did not thin the bushes, and so let them grow into trees? "These bushes," he said, "are the hairs of our head, the strong teeth of our jaws. We allow no one to touch them; then if the enemy (Turk) comes here, we can resist him." I afterwards found it is a law among all the people, not to clear the bush away any where, it offering the best obstacle to the approach of a regular force. The country

was very rich, but generally only cultivated in the neighbourhood of the villages. This district of Bene Ali, which we now traversed, is the best cultivated of any of the lower ones.

Ascending a ridge on our right, we opened a lovely view of the sea, and found ourselves east of Gebail, which lay out over the plain abreast of us. At noon we halted, having come seven hours. One of the guides Sheik Osman had left with us, recounted the capture of Acre, he having been then in the service of Ibrahim Pasha; he said: "When the party to which I belonged ran, we met a regiment of Turks just without the town; they shouted, 'Whose soldiers are you?' 'Ibrahim Pasha's.' 'He is *bottal*, finished, (it may, perhaps, be better rendered by our term, "done up,") join Abdel Medjed and come and plunder.' So we shouted Abdel Medjed and returned, and all plundered together."

Shortly afterwards we reached a village, finely situated on a height, Ein el Sekarr, and were received at the house of Sheik Succor, a notorious *bon vivant*. He was a young man, of twenty-five or thirty years of age, and his father

had possessed great influence, being finally murdered at Latakia by order of Ibrahim Pasha, who dreaded his power in the mountains. This influence the present sheik had lost by his dissolute habits and extravagance. He received us very kindly, pressing us to stop with him ; but we were too anxious to press on to Metua. We likewise were told of the necessity of making a long *détour*, as the direct road passed through Zama, the village in revolt. Sheik Succor told me they had fired at one of his men on the preceding day. The sheik has made an upper room, from whence the view was charming, extending from Tripoli to Djebel Okal, but hardly appreciable on account of the cold now felt on its elevated site.

Among those who sat in the room were three people, whose fathers had been barbarously murdered by the Turks, Sheik Succor himself and two brothers. Their father was sheik, governing a large district. He repaired to Latakia upon some business, and lodged in the house of a Jew. While sitting in his room, the door opened, a volley was poured in, and the door closed, leaving the poor man dying in his

blood. All this they spoke of very coolly ; yet what a fearful vengeance the Turks are storing up, to be wreaked on them on the first occasion ! We had some difficulty to escape the proffered hospitality, but at last found ourselves again on the road. The mountains now became serious work, the ascents steep and tiring, the sides covered with bushes, the myrtle predominating. Peaked rocks, about six and ten feet high, rose thick between the spaces, affording splendid ground for guerilla defence. The roads, however, were well made and kept, affording a great contrast to those of the Lebanon.

The sheiks' tombs were very numerous. Ascending the steep hill over which the village is scattered, we arrived at Metua, the residence of Sheik Habeeb. His family claims a great antiquity, with what justice I cannot say ; but for many generations they have been the head, or rather one of the religious heads, of the Ansayrii nation ; for the chief residing at Szaffyta, now banished to Erzeroum, was perhaps his equal. He has about 1000*l.* a year revenue. Much of this, however, is property left to his dead ancestors by pious persons, and

the proceeds of which he is bound to spend in entertainments. No idea at all approaching to fact can be formed of what he has. It consists of presents in kind, of proceeds of religious collections, &c. He himself possesses a few corn-mills and gardens. All who come are fed, and remain as long as they please. This he does with the view of being venerated after his death, a honour principally gained by this hospitality.

The house was a long structure, badly built of mud and stones, without windows, save two or three small square holes. There was a building attached for a kitchen, and some bush-covered sheds. Within, it contained one large room, the ceiling low, of huge uncut trees, over which were laid bushes, and over this a foot's depth of earth, well rammed, the whole covered with a coating of mortar, to exclude the wet. Huge posts, with a cross-beam on the top, ran down the centre to support the beams, as each beam extended but half the width of the room. The sides were rudely plastered with clay; the ceiling black with smoke. At the upper end a large corner was rimmed off by a hard mud ledge. The floor, as usual, was of smoothed well

rammed mud. This, unless exposed to much wet, becomes as hard as stone. In the centre of this was a circular hole for the fire, and round were spread felts and some very dirty cushions. On the sides were several raised wattled places to sleep in, and each contained the most cherished valuables of the occupants. Huge baskets, plastered without with mud, held the store of corn; they are filled from the top, and the corn is drawn off from a hole in the lower part, which is closed with a bung.

To a beam hung a basket full of wooden spoons; and this may be said to be all the furniture of the room. The sheik himself was absent on my arrival, but a messenger was instantly dispatched to apprise him of my visit. His brothers, meanwhile, welcomed me most kindly, and assured me of the chief's speedy return. Our carpet was spread on the platform, and we were left to repose after our ride.* The women were busied pounding corn, or rather bruising it; others kneading dough; the youngest and prettiest wife† of our host ordering, bustling, and now and then giving vigorous aid

* This was a refinement I never met before.

† He has four wives, the full number allowed by their law.

to the work. Some patted the dough in the way I have before described; others carried it off to be baked in large open baskets. They at least were active. Every now and then the wife bared her breast and gave milk to a young urchin of two or three years, who walked up to her, spoke, and appeared to have far outgrown such food.

The two brothers of the sheik now re-entered, and we were eagerly gazed at by a large concourse of people. Yet though the two young sheiks (they were perhaps twenty and twenty-one years of age,) owned they had never seen a European before, they exhibited no impertinent curiosity, and seemed to take my strange habits, manners, and appearance as quite a matter of course. Towards eve huge cauldrons of wheat, boiled in grease, were carried in, and boys and men eagerly flocked round it, armed with spoons. They dug them in, fed, and dug again, until they were satisfied. About four hundred must have been thus fed. Flat basket trays were then brought, and from their contents the chiefs of religion ate together. They contained no other luxury beyond the wheat than leban.

We had had our meal, cooked by our own servants, and devoured it by ourselves. I have before mentioned the almost Brahminical ideas of the religious sheiks with regard to eating. Poor Sheik Hassan thus had eaten nothing but some bread he carried with him, for two days; as he will not eat with any but a sheik of religion, and there was none such on the road. The consul's kavass was consoled by great luxury with our servants; the vice-consul asked him to eat with us, but this my servant spared me, saying in his ear, "I advise you not to eat with our master: he never has anything, and holds grease and onions in especial horror. We feed for him, for it is a disgrace for a great Bey not to consume abundance."

We conversed till a late hour, and then the party separated, save a few desperate prozers, who bored on, long after I was sound asleep on the felts, the fleas hopping about me merrily. I omitted to mention that poor Abdallah, my faithful follower through many months of wandering, got a bad attack of the fever. The others told me of it, as, contrary to the rule of no man being a hero to his valet-de-chambre,

they think me, as a doctor at least, infallible. On the Sheik Hassan condoling with me on his illness, I said, "Ya sheik, why not cure him? the power, they say, is with you." One of Sheik Habeeb's brothers then called for a piece of twine, which he doubled and laid up, making in it four knots, evidently repeating some form as he did so. This was tied round my servant's right wrist.* The fellow's village is a Christian village among the Ansayri mountains, and the people have therefore imbibed not a few of their prejudices: he therefore had as much or more faith in this than he had in me.

At a very early hour on the morrow I started off with a brother of Sheik Habeeb's and some fifteen armed men, on foot, to see a castle, situated among the mountains in the neighbourhood. I rode over the hill, and then with difficulty got the horse down the opposite side. Here equestrianism ceased, and I left him, pur-

* Another remedy in the event of illness is putting some of the dust from the tomb of a sheik in a cup of water, and drinking it. Burckhardt mentions the body of a man, who died, was washed, and the water carefully collected and sent over the country. This water is used as an infallible medicine, but only at the last, being far too sacred for common ailments. It is also put in stone bottles and hung over the doorway within, as a bath, wherein the coming spirit may pass, previous to entering the new-born infant, or the parting likewise.

suing the rest of the way on foot. The flatter portions of land were all cultivated, but the steep hill sides covered with bushes and trees alone. The whole scene was wild in the extreme: below, the hills tumbling, rising, in every form, till clouds shut in the view; above, grand, magnificent mountains, in all the splendour of cloud and storm. We surmounted the hill before us, and I was shown the castle, apparently a very insignificant ruin, on a hill close by, separated from us by a deep and narrow gorge. Down this they plunged, then up again the castle hill.

Striving to do my best, I gained great applause for my pedestrian performances; greatly, however, at the expense of my ease. The Castle of Beni Israel, or the Children of Israel, is situated on a high conical hill, in the middle of a deep gorge. The stream of the valley, divided by the hill, flows round the sides of it, uniting again below. On the top of the hill, are the remains of a strong wall, built of rubble, and a work of later date than the Castle. Behind the parapet is a wall with loop-holes and projections, so as to bring a cross fire on

various weak points; but no tower. Within this again are large ruins of a village, built of the round cement stones of the stream. On a smaller rising ground is the Castle, whose walls are well built of fine well-cut stone, quarried from the rock. Two or three highly pointed arches are still standing; but I could find no inscription or certain indication to point out the period of its erection; for the arch, undeniably, was pointed very early in the Saracenic era. Some of the interior windows were large and square.

They led me to the entrance of a subterraneous passage, which they told me was the Prison of Blood (meaning the prison for great offences rather). Except the wonders of this spot, its depth, and the vast treasures contained in it, they had no traditions of the place. However, as we were there, they surrounded me and begged me to be seated, requesting to know what I wanted with Sheik Habeeb. Stoutly maintaining the truth, that it was but to make his friendship, they were much vexed at my, as they fancied, not wishing to confide to them also the secret. After awhile, they

resumed their civility, and we proceeded back to the sheik's house. One of the brothers of the sheik, who, as I before said, had accompanied me, spoke both warmly and well of their condition. "Think not that the Christians," he said, "are more loved by the Turks than we are. They are more numerous, and the Frank protects them; but for us, who have none to protect us—none to speak—we are a ready prey for the Turk; and, being weak, a fair spoil for the Christian. While the one takes by force, the other sucks the remainder by fraud. Why should we toil when those we hate reap? Why should we improve, to better our enemy? Ya Wallah! we hate them, their faith, their race, their name; and they know it. Did a Turk ever do good to one of us? if he did, it was as a man gives corn to his beast, to keep him alive to work."

On our return we found the sheik had arrived: he met me about one hundred yards from his house, and, after embracing, we walked back hand-in-hand. Seated in his house, he entreated my influence in his present difficulty, but seemed satisfied when I fairly explained

the reasons which prevented me. A large concourse sat round. The conversation then turned on Frangistan and its nations. I stated, that for my own part, I thought England the greatest and most powerful of nations ; though free to own, that whether right or not, French, Germans, or Russians would perhaps each say the same of their own. “And your country, Ya Beg, is it like this ?” “We have winter six months of the year, and rain nearly daily ; our fellahs have to gather in and plant by stealth to secure their harvests, and even then, with all their skill, all are sometimes lost by the weather. Ours is a small island ; the sun shines on us at intervals ; the ground not fertile, demanding constant assistance to produce. Still, by justice, honesty, and integrity, under Allah, we have conquered perhaps a fourth of the world, and our queen rules in peace over three hundred millions of souls. All this, Ya Sheik, is by knowledge, by schools, by study. Wise men write books, which are directly multiplied a thousand fold, so that one man becomes as a thousand wise men teaching the youth.”

I then endeavoured to point out the temporal benefits that would result from schools; that if no other advantage was gained, it would *emollit mores, nec sinit esse feroces*. He said "If you were to send a teacher, they would not let their children attend." "Send your children, and the others would soon do likewise," I replied.

He promised at last protection and a house; but that the school must be under the supervision of one of themselves; that no means might be used to convert the boy whom youth and ungrown intellects would render liable to such perversion. Looking upon education as the ground-work of conversion, and believing that except in a few special cases none are converted by other means, this is all one would wish. Create the desire to learn, raise the wish to enquire, and with God's blessing the rest will follow as a matter of course. It may be difficult to get up a purely secular school, as beyond the province of the missionaries; and moreover the subscribers to the Societies, eager always for astounding facts, for miraculous conversions, as the immediate result of their gold, might be unready to prosecute a

work from which no result could be anticipated for years. To the first class, who will admit of no compromise, however expedient and justifiable, but who must at once flaunt forth the Labarum, let me say, "Our Saviour tells us to be wise as serpents;" to the other "Give alms; give money,—not for a return for news or excitement : give true alms."

CHAPTER VI.

Appeal to Christian Sympathies—Zama—A Village of Robbers—Kying Aga—Nature of his Influence—The imprisoned Sheik—Kalaat Mahalbee—The Castle described—Value of a Wife—Recognised as an Ansayrii—Their personal Kindness—Miracles and Charms—The Judge of the Ansayrii—Sheik Shemseen Sultan—The Beit Shielf—Ansayrii hiding-places—Kalaat el Sion—Siege by Ibrahim Pasha—Military Defences—Ruins—Hospitality of the Ansayrii—More Ruins—District of Ballidar—Nahr el Kabia—Ibn el Larri—Bedama—Cleanliness of Turkish Villages—Chambers cut in the Rock—Djesser Shogger.

FROM my peculiar position with regard to this people, hitherto sealed to the world,* I may perhaps over-rate their claim to consideration ; but surely, some sixty to one hundred thousand souls are of importance. Now an opening has been made: I have shown that the traveller may safely wander among them : have heard and over-ruled their objections to a school, and in fact have based the spot for the fulcrum of that vast lever which I intreat and beg those who read this to aid me in using. After a long

* When I started for the mountains, there was not a person in Latakia who did not thoroughly believe I went to certain death. Not one of the residents had ever ventured there ; it was even to the towns-people a *terra incognita*.

discussion, all the young, common people, women, &c., were ejected, and I again underwent a long and close examination. Our horses were ready, and the sheik embracing me, we started on our road.

They had no legend of the Castle, but judged that being called Kalaat el Beni Israel, it had been built by the Jews, the name meaning literally, Castle of the Children of Israel. Some people had been sent before us to announce my wish to pass through the village of Zama. Here dwelt the robbers I have before spoken of as having declared they would fire on whoever attempted to approach their village. We descended over much the same rough-broken ground as on our ascent. It was pleasant to enter a warmer climate, as we had found Metua excessively cold. We passed through the village without opposition, the people only endeavouring to detain me to rest and eat. As we were riding, however, down the hill, on the opposite side, some half mile below the village, we met four men returning home. On seeing our party, they unslung their muskets and prepared for war. Two of my

men threw themselves on my bridle and nearly cast my horse back on his haunches, saying, "You must remain here. You are our life—our soul." I, however, spurred clear, and, riding on with the party, we approached each other, my men saying, "Do you know whose son he is? Would you fire on the Bey?" Assuring them that we would not hurt them, they permitted us to approach, still remaining in their attitude of defence. I said, "Come, my friends, this is rather a bounce; we are fourteen, and you but four, one of whom is a boy." "Ya Wallah, we thought you were the Bashi Basook, and there was but to die: but we are happy now, for we have seen you. Come back and eat our food; we will do what you bid." I said, however, their money was unclean, and I could not. They owned after a short conversation that they had been terribly frightened.

It was the people of Zama who about two months back robbed the wife of the farmer of the customs at Beyrout. He is an Armenian, and his wife was coming from Constantinople by land to join him. She had with her all her

jewels, dresses, ornaments, and about 1500*l.* sterling in money. At Latakia, she was pressed to take a large escort, as the report had gone out that a caravan of gold was going to pass, so she was sure of being robbed. Anxious to save the four or five hundred piastres it would have cost, she left with only seven people, muleteers, servants, &c. A set of Turks from Gebail and the people of Zama waylaid her on the road, and stole everything, wounded one of her people who made some resistance, but let her and the mules proceed. The Turkish Pasha had not force enough to punish the robbers. Some few were caught at Gebail and sent to Beyrout. The Pasha of Beyrout then sent a man of much influence here, Kyng Aga, and commissioned him to amass the amount and remit it to him.*

On receipt of the order, Kyng Aga proceeds to Sheik Habeeb, and partly by threats, partly by promises, extorts from him a paper for the amount, knowing that through his influence he

* I ought to have mentioned before, that Latakia is governed by a *Kaimakan* or colonel, who receives his appointment from the Porte, but is under the Pasha of Beyrout. This worthy, however, does nothing; the unpaid members of the council doing everything. Among these the greatest are Kyng Aga and another.

could again collect the sum from his people. His influence, however, is purely moral ; and the village of Zama, refusing to pay even a part, he has no physical force to back him, and the local government is afraid to send the small force, some five hundred men, they have here, to enforce its laws. Many of the articles stolen have been recovered, having been sold by the robbers in the mountains. I myself saw a jewel worth perhaps fifty pounds, which the possessor had bought for sixteen dollars. Sheik Habeeb, therefore, has to make a contribution on the whole mountaineers, entreating each to give as he can afford. The injustice of this act need not be commented upon. Here is a difficult and dangerous task imposed upon a man whom the Government does not recognise, while it owns itself too weak to punish the offenders, or even to compel them to restore the property they have stolen ; and all the peaceable, quiet inhabitants of the mountains have to contribute to pay back the sum. It is a very premium on robbery and rebellion.

We passed the Nahr Snowbar, or pine-seed river, and rested under some olive-trees by the

small village of Kafir Debin for breakfast. The people, at our approach, fled in every direction, as had done every person we had met on the road, thinking we were irregular troops, but they gradually returned, the men coming and kissing my hands and the hem of my coat. Fresh complaints poured in; the sheik of the village had been in prison two months. It appears that the village is the property of the Sultan's mosque at Gebail. The sheik of the mosque alleged that, for seven years, they have paid a sum short of what was due, and the sheik of the village is seized and put in prison till the whole is paid. Firstly, the claim is said to be unjust, and then this sheik has been sheik but for one year, so is hardly responsible for the debts of a former period.

After they had held a short conference with Sheik Hassan, they came and entreated me to liberate him, bringing me an excessively pretty girl of about fourteen years of age as a present. She came up as I sat, and, taking my hand, placed it on her head, bowing down to the ground. A boy was also given me as a servant. I declared it much better that they should

marry each other, and it cost me a heavy present and no small restraint of self to refuse the gifts. I was on my return enabled to procure the release of the sheik, and the presents were again brought to my house and pressed on my acceptance.

We reached Caldahha in the evening, and received a kind reception again from Ismael Osman, who was very low from the effects of a visit from Kyng Aga, whom he abused pretty stoutly. On the following morning, my companion said he had suffered so much from fatigue, and feared so much for my safety, he must return; so he set off, I proceeding northeasterly to visit the Kalaat (Castle) of Mahalee, (the more ancient name is said to have been Blackniis, *i.e.*, Bethlehem). The road was much as usual; the mountains very rugged and beautiful. Ascending the first ridge, I passed through a thick forest of bushes, and, passing up a narrow gorge, sighted the Castle; winding round the foot of the height on which it stands, I left my horses at the village, and, accompanied by an aged sheik and several villagers, walked up to it. The Castle stands on an isolated

height in a valley; the hill on which it is built being of equal height to those around, can be ascended on all sides. The outer walls covering the whole face of the hill still exist, though much ruined. They were well built of large stones and defended by towers; these had large windows as if more for comfort than actual defence.

The sheik told me these he remembered four stories high, but that they were destroyed by an earthquake some twenty years ago. We entered by a lofty arched gateway, with large vaulted rooms on either side; within again is another wall surrounding the inner castle, the wall falling inwards, built on, as it were, the steep sides of the hill; there is a space of fifty or sixty yards in width between the inner and outer walls, and abundance of buildings, stores, &c. Mounting within the inner, I found that again defended, divided into two portions, the one called the Hareem; in the other were several fine rooms, one still called the Divan el Melek. A ditch separated the Hareem from the rest, and numerous loop-holes frowned on the bridge; this was nearly all ruined. The sheik said this

portion was built by the Jews; that the Christians then held it, building the rest; that El Melek el Daheir then wrested it from them, A.D. 1181, (I never heard a date before from a native which bore such a semblance of truth,) and he held it through one of his generals till the second in command murdered him, and maintained his independence for many years.

One night the Sultan's officers mounted by this window, murdered him as he slept, and gained the castle for his master. I found no one inscription; many were buried they told me, but none knew where. On one slab I found where there appeared to have been an inscription; in one corner there was the resemblance of a *fleur-de-lis*.

On returning to the village, the people had prepared a feast ample for twenty, and pressed me to eat. On my complimenting my host on the extreme beauty of his daughters, he said—"In your country would they fetch two thousand piastres?" "But have the mountain youth no taste; will they not give two thousand for such angels?" "Yes, Ya Beg, they would, but then they cannot; they have it

not, They pay ten now and twenty then : perhaps the whole is not paid before ten years ; then he gives a sheep to-day and a felt to-morrow, but I want two thousand down. Come marry, Ya Beg ; why waste your youth in wandering over old mountains, looking at ruined stones. Marry and live long ? Kishmet, kishmet ! ”

Contribution was called for, the green flag passed through, an old man claimed charity from me as a true Ansayri, and, shouting long life, as I gave it him, passed on.

At a fountain, a few hundred yards from the village, I found and copied the following. It was in an old and very difficult character, and I could do nothing but transcribe it as accurately as I could, or as the high wind and cold would allow me. Subsequently, I got it translated by my clever and kind friend, the *cadi* here. It consisted of three lines on one stone and three lines on another. The following is a literal translation ;—

On the first,

“ The upright Emeer endowed with virtue,
Our Lord who fights for the faith, the Great
Mansoor ordered this fountain to be built.”

On the second,

“ In the name of God,—by the order of the victorious
The father of favours,* Sallahad, the just Sultan,
May God give him victory. He restored this fountain,
Built by Mansoor—
The building, let it be made strong so as to last.”

On my return to the cottage poor Abdallah was in a strong fit of the fever, and another of the servants felt its approach : so reluctantly I determined to return and leave the other higher ranges unexplored. Forcing the sick to mount, we rode down the valley, the scenery most beautiful as we got on to the lower hills. They were lovely with the young spring ; broad, open valleys full of young corn. Several sheiks joined me, the poor left their work to kiss my hands, my march was like a triumph. At one place, a small village, the people unloaded my baggage and carried it off, declaring I should not go through their village without eating ; at another they took the bridle from my horse, asserting the same, the children followed me clinging to my stirrups. At Sholfatia the horses were carried off, and we were compelled to remain ; here again the two high chiefs of

* *i. e.* The fountain of honour.

religion, Sheiks Hassan and Sulieman, and myself had a long and interesting discussion. On the following day I reached Latakia, and had for the next three days slight attacks of fever.

A miracle was performed, of which I, of course, was duly informed. A calf dedicated to St. George strayed into the garden of the dragoman of the French vice-consul; his son was there superintending the building of a room. Seeing the calf eat some plants, he took up a stone, and throwing it, struck the poor animal on the forehead; it dropped down dead; hardly had it expired, when the whole place they were building fell down.

The lovely spring weather was far too precious to be wasted, so taking a cold bath to check the fever, I started again and rode to Sholfatia to pick up Sheik Hassan. He was writing a charm when I found him, but finishing his task expressed his willingness to accompany me: escaping from the kindly proffered civility of the villagers, we mounted and rode on. I had a long and interesting argument with the sheik, on women being without souls; a doctrine he most resolutely

maintained. He has a daughter, one of the loveliest creatures imagination could picture, and I was endeavouring to work on his love for her to alter his opinion on the matter, for it seemed impossible

“ That any young Indee’s glance could read,
And keep that portion of his creed,
Which says, that woman’s soul is dust.”

I fear, however, he was perfectly unconvinced. Speaking of the devil he cast out the other day, he said it was not a Christian devil, “ for when I adjured it by the name of Jesus, it said, ‘ Ah, I do not believe in him:’ it was a Jewish spirit, and has been about here a long while.”

My very versatile companion, the consul, discovered a new road and place to rest in, so we turned east up the valley, of which Sholfatia forms the mouth. The hills were round, and mostly planted with corn. About three hours up I received a kind invitation from the judge of the Ansayri. This office seems to be an hereditary one, nor is he in any way recognised by the Porte. Among his own people he is the universal arbitrator, settling all disputed claims, proving wills, &c. ; for this he receives ten per

cent. I asked my companion, "If any body disputed or would not abide by his decision, what would he do?" "Oh, none dare do that, his family are too numerous and powerful." It perhaps in no small degree hastened the dispatch of business, that the plaintiff lodges, eats, and remains with him till he has given a decision.

We passed on, pleading a prior engagement. Entered the great Mockata, or district, as it is called, the district of Beit Shielf. The scenery became wild and bold, hill rose to mountain, soft springing green corn to sterner crag, smooth plain to precipitous heights. After a delightful ride we reached Melbet, a large straggling village, the residence of Sheik Shemseen Sultan, the most powerful temporal chief of the Ansayri. He received us most kindly, and lodged us in his guest-house, where his brothers, nephews, and himself, kindly busied themselves for our comfort.

A plentiful dinner was provided, and wine of capital quality. The nephews of the chief served us, he receiving our news. For me, as one of themselves, they expressed great fears,

both that the Turks would publicly kill me, or more probably poison me in secret. “We had an Ansayri Pasha once, they thought him a Turk, but directly they knew really what he was, they killed him.” The sheik’s brother was a noble fellow, a perfect specimen of the savage in his grandest form. He was loud in his assertion that, as far as his people went, they would not give the nizam.* “I shall retire to a glen, and there rob my enemy and live. My people, like myself, care little for home or roof; the mountain side with my son is better than the serai and him away.” The elder brother of Shemseen Sultan was shot by another tribe; this produced a war, in which they wasted the enemy dreadfully.

The Beit Shielf is among the bravest of the Ansayri tribes; they resisted all attacks before the time of Ibrahim Pasha, and even by him were but partially reduced. The village of Melbet is large and straggling, well cultivated, and such ground as is in use seems very productive. On the east rise the fine Djebel, *tuttoune*, or Tobacco, mountains, where the finest

* Conscription.

growth is obtained, and many portions of the village are now ready for the crop. Sheik Shemseen is not a high man in religion, and therefore the wine, at our drinking of which Sheik Hassan looked unutterable things. This family is, however, one of the oldest among the Ansayri.

We started early on the following morning, our host's brother and about twenty men forming our escort; the road was rough, but the scenery beautiful. Our friends took me alone far out of the road to their hiding-place: "In the event of a quarrel with the government here you will find your servants; if ten thousand enemies are after you we will protect you or die with you." The spot could not have been better selected for their purpose. In the rocks about were many half-natural, half-artificial caves, and water and wood were in great abundance; pasture also for the cattle; and this forms all they require for food. Each man makes his own gunpowder, and stores of lead are not wanting. We passed the tombs of the ancestors of the sheik, and about two hours' ride brought us in sight of the Kalaat el Sion,

or Sioun, as it is pronounced. The first impression is one of disappointment, after the exaggerated accounts given of it, and one felt vexed at again having believed the Arabs, who will give the most exaggerated account of any thing or place if they think it will please you, or be gain to them.

We now turned down, and again lost sight of it, riding along the side of a rock which rose perpendicularly above; a couple of hundred yards brought us to the ditch, and there we had an opportunity of judging of the enormity of the work. The Castle is built on a point of land; a deep valley on either side separates it from the neighbouring heights, which both command it; it is isolated from the shoulder of the rock by a huge, deep, broad ditch, cut out of the solid rock. At the bottom of this we now stood; the height from the bottom to the foot of the walls must be two hundred to three hundred feet, the width eighty to a hundred, and the length cut through five hundred yards. On either side there are numerous troughs for horses, and marks, as if for poles: this was probably the place for the horses, or else a place

of refuge for the country Christians in time of danger; there is also a small postern about fifteen feet from the ground, but the passage has been blocked up. Half way through stands a tall, square pillar of the solid rock; on this rested the drawbridge; it has a cross cut on its northern face. After breakfast we left the horses, and walked up to explore the interior: much of the ruin was effected by Ibrahim Pasha, who attacked it. The people of the village, Mussulmans, refused to submit to his authority, and, trusting to the strength of the castle, entered it on the approach of his forces. Planting his battery on the northern height, he soon shook their walls and their confidence, and on the second day they capitulated. We were shown, of course, the prison of blood, the well, and the divan of the king; but the natives possessed no traditions of it, except they called the south-eastern tower Borge el Djemale, and said, in times of war the prisoners were thrown from there. The castle is well built, its foundations resting on the solid rock. It presents an irregular oblong form, round which runs a strong wall, further strengthened by square

towers of two or three stories in height ; each story has large windows, originally barred with iron, and the chambers all vaulted. The western part seems the citadel, higher than the rest within the exterior walls, which are vaulted over, thus rendering all the loop-holes under cover, and forming enormous spaces for stores or men. The floor of these was strewn with burgoll and other grain, the remains of the stores of the Sionites and the soldiers.

There is a second line of defence. Between the two are great ruins of vaults, and a cloister, still tolerably perfect. The towers here are enormous ; we ascended the principal one, containing a large vaulted room on each floor ; and a huge square shaft descends from top to bottom. Round the battlements were huge square rocks, loose, each with a small niche in the under part, in which to insert a lever, to hurl the huge masses on the assailants' heads below. Down the shaft ran a small staircase, or rather notches, for descending, which, according to the natives, communicated with the postern at the foot of the ditch. This seems not improbable. The tower was the last refuge ;

here the last desperate defence was to be made, and after all, a retreat was deemed no unwise provision.

In this portion I could find no church, or building that seemed at all to have been one; huge stone shot lay about. In the centre is a ruined mosque, but it does not bear a date of more than three hundred years; the minaret is square and low, so it may probably have been a church. We could not enter it for ruins. There is also a fine bath, built with great taste; of the work of the knights or the Christian chiefs: it shows that though dedicated to war, to toil, and fatigue, they forgot not to avail themselves of the softer pleasures of the nations they warred against. Lower again, as we advance towards the eastern extremity, we find an interior wall and towers, also vast vaults. Here is a small ruined church; beyond, to the outer wall, there seem to have been houses, probably the dwellings of those attached to the Castle, and who tilled the adjoining lands. I could find no inscription; on several stones an N or an M or S were cut, but apparently with no design; the reservoir of water

is a vast vault, half underground, the sides and bottom well cemented ; the natives say there is always water there. They amused themselves with firing their muskets in it, and the echo within and then without, as it rolled in numberless repetitions among the mountains, was very fine. There is also a deep well. We were heartily tired with scrambling over stones, into brakes, and creeping along vaults ; so we sat down.

Again I must refute the calumny, that the Ansayrii are inhospitable. Among those around us were two Egyptians who had fled from the army, and taken refuge among the mountains. No slight had ever been put on them for their religion, and, as one said with great glee, they never had been asked to work. Wives had been offered them ; one had married, the other had refused eleven women who had been offered him. He said they were plain : “ And how can you,” said the sheik,—“ an ugly fellow, is he not, Ya beg?—hope to have a pretty pearl?” He denied his own want of beauty, but owned, he had found no pretty maid who would have him. Suddenly, a shout was heard on the

hill, it was a peculiar cry, and then a woman kept up a frightful noise on the hill opposite. I was in a crowd, and then in a moment alone. My companions sprang down where one would have feared to see a favourite goat graze. My companion also retired, and I mounted the rock above the Castle, beyond the ditch, and explored the ruins of the large village that formerly stood there; all, however, is ruined; save a church, portions of which still remain shaded by some fine sycamores. Each house of the village, enormous labour! had a reservoir of water cut in the solid rock attached to it.

After my return our friends came back breathless, and desperately excited. It appeared that, some time before, the northern district of Ballulehee had carried off three sheep of the sheiks, while grazing on the mountains; a party of them had just been seen driving some bulls; these they had pursued, the people fled leaving their charge, which had been captured and sent to the village.

We bid our friends farewell, and passing through the ditch, took a northerly direction. The country about Sion, north, is inhabited by

Mussulmans ; these are much less taxed than the Ansayrii. On the taking of the country by Ibrahim Pasha, he equalised all the taxes ; on its return to the authority of the Sultan, however, the Mussulmans managed to obtain a considerable mitigation of theirs ; they are therefore much richer than the Ansayrii, and are exempt also from the petty exactions to which the others are subject. There are also two villages of Christians, who complain sadly of their neighbours. I regret much that I lost my notes of their names, numbers, &c. They were of the Greek religion.

The district of Ballidar, which we now entered, is exceedingly rich, and the lands of the Mussulmans cultivated with a care I have not seen in these mountains. In the extensive vineyards the vine stands to the height of six or eight feet, unsupported : then two branches taken are led to fig trees which stand at a convenient distance ; all but these two branches are cut off. The people we saw were all well, many most handsomely dressed ; their villages large, and better built than they generally are.

We now leave the Djebel Ansayrii, and enter the Djebel Kraudee. Though south of the Nahr El Kebeer, the mass of the people are Ansayrii. Passed some large villages, and then through fir forests carpeted with wild flowers, till we descended on the noble valley of the Nahr El Kebeer. At Khan Hurshee the road follows the river, winding up a valley whose scenery in parts equals that of the Orontes. At one place a chief, richly dressed, with about twenty armed attendants, was inspecting the building of a khan. He was a tall, mild-looking man, and saluted me with all civility, inviting me to remain with him ; this I declined, but could not resist his pressing request to rest a few moments.

After we were seated and had again saluted, I commenced smoking my nargilleh, when he said, "Your Excellency wishes to kill me." At first I thought the man mad ; but no, he seemed quiet, and half abashed. "You said," he went on, "you would like to kill me." "Upon my honour," I replied, "I will not deny it, for I may have said so ; but why, when, and where, I cannot imagine." He said, "I am

Ibn el Larri.” “You are, are you?” But he met my glance as if proud of the name. I said, “Then Ibn el Larri, peace be with you, for I cannot smoke with you.” He thanked me for my opinion of him ; said if I would listen he would explain all ; and put quite a different construction on the matter in question between us. The story and my remark was this :

A quarrel having arisen between this man and a neighbouring Aga, El Larri invites him to his house, and there, as he sits at table, shoots him. The Aga was one of the few honest Turks in the country, and ruled his districts with justice. El Larri had refused to pay his tax, and from goodness of heart, he went to persuade, when he had strength to enforce. The Aga’s children were then boys ; they escaped, and eluded the pursuit the murderer made after them. Lately the eldest son went to avenge his father’s death, and in fair fight killed El Larri’s brother. He pursued, found the young man, who challenged him to settle the quarrel, but he ordered his people to bind him, and then with his own hand cut his

throat. Nor were these murders his first; he is said to have shot eighteen men in cold blood. Such crimes called for vengeance; he fled to Latakia, and took refuge under a European flag, finding a protector in the consul. A large present muzzled justice, and the consul drowned any qualms he might have had in a money bag. The man returned to his property, his house alone having been burned by the Aga's followers. A relation of the murdered boy asked me what he should do; it was then I said, "Shoot him, like a dog, wherever you find him." His followers are all Ansayri, or he might not have let me pass so freely as he did. Passed the remarkable gap, the Sheik el Ajoussee, which has often been described.

We lost our way, nor was it till late in the evening we reached the Koordish village of Bedama. Late as it was, the people were all up, having despatched a man to the Moutselim's for news of the conscription; and we had not arrived half an hour before musquets were fired, children shouting, women whirroo-whirrooing, and the whole village seemed crazy. We sank to sleep long before their happiness

was over. All our sage counsels of "wait and see," were held as Christian hatred of them, and nothing was heard but cries of "Long live the Sultan." As neither myself, nor the consul, nor any of our servants spoke Turkish well, we did not enter into any discussion on the subject, but could only pity them. They feasted the newsbearer, and even the women forgot their reserve and pressed eagerly round him.

This village, like most of the Turkish ones, has a look of superior wealth. The room we occupied was neat and clean, clean mattresses were given us to lie on, and provisions seemed in abundance. The people were well dressed; their taxes amount to about ten per cent. on their produce, and little or nothing is exacted from them besides. We started early, but the sheik had returned from Djisser with orders to send the men to draw lots for the conscription. So there was not a gay voice to be heard, and one man was punished for saying he hoped the Sultan would die. They cursed us, as the cause of all. I remarked to them, that they seemed to want discipline, so that the nizam would

probably do them good, and they would learn not to insult harmless people.

We now left the Nahr el Kebeer, which takes a more northerly direction, and rode over a broken country, the undulations very steep, and rough, and tedious. We had lost also the high road, and, without a guide as we were, found it impossible to regain it. In a small valley we passed a huge boulder of rock isolated in the ground. This had been hollowed into three chambers: steps had been cut to ascend to the top; gutters are cut over it to convey the water into the basins hollowed in the well; and here and there are seats. Two doors lead to the chambers within, in which are troughs sufficiently long to contain a body, and smaller niches, as if for a vase or light. On the right or south end was a coffin, within the chamber, which together contained eleven sarcophagi; as we proceeded saw numerous other caves and tombs; some worked, seemingly, with considerable care. At last, from the top of a mountain, we saw the rebel Aazy flowing in lazy volume through its broad valley, which at

this season of the year presented the appearance of a vast marsh, through whose centre a clearer way left passage for the swollen river. We shortly arrived at the small town of Djisser Shogger.

CHAPTER VII.

Djisser Shogger—State of the Village—My Character—Its Solution—Castle of Shogger—The Euphrates Expedition—Population of Shogger—Castle in Ruins—Arabic Inscriptions—Ladies criticise my Dress—Bigotry of the Turks—History of Mahomet Aga—Strange modes of Litigation—Civility of the Pasha—The Nizam—Drawing the Nizam—Bridge over the Orontes—Village of Arneba—Djerradi—Absence of Wood in Houses—A Surprise in a Vault—Caffir-el-Barah—Sad Feelings produced by Ruins—A Set of Braggarts—Opinions of the English.

THE village of the bridge of Shogger, for such is the proper translation,—Shogger being a Mussulman town or large village, some nine miles off, to which the bridge is the high road,—receives this name in contra-distinction to the bridge about six miles lower down the river. It is situated on the slope of the hill above the Orontes, on its left or eastern bank. The houses are of mud, some few only being built of stone. The roofs of most are flat, though among them may be seen the sloping roof tiled over, found universally in the valley of the Orontes. It contains seven families of Greek Christians, seven hundred and fifty Mussulman males. It

has a fine mosque, and an old Greek church with two priests; also a large khan, rapidly falling to ruin. The Moutselim who paid me a visit said he had just repaired it. This he had done in a truly Turkish manner, though by no means an uncommon one. It consisted originally of two stories; the lower one, vaulted, had suffered little decay; but the upper, through neglect and the rain entering the walls, had become very ruinous, so the Moutselim razed the whole of this floor, and built his own serai of the stones, thus leaving a tolerably perfect khan of one story high.

The bazaars are such as might be expected; chiefly cottons, tombac, and trade for the neighbouring mountains. Had the road Ibrahim Pasha began from Latakia here, been completed by his successors, no doubt Djisser would have become a place of considerable trade; as were the harbour of Latakia well repaired it might supersede Scanderoon as the port of Aleppo; Scanderoon being difficult of ingress or egress for vessels during northerly breezes, and not a safe anchorage at all times of the weather.

The consul left me to transact business, so riding through the town I took up my quarters in a small house on the banks of the river. The whole place was in commotion awaiting the arrival momentarily expected of the Pasha and doctor to draw the conscription. We paid a visit to the Christian collector of the customs, who directly asked my companion, "Have you seen the Frank Ansayri? they say he is more fearless than the lion, beats all Turks who dare look at him, rides night and day, is on the top of Nebbe Meta this evening and at the sea in the morning. Have you seen him?" We drew out of him the rest of my fame as follows:—"He writes down all things, numbers the very trees, consults the sun every half hour, brings stars, moon, and saints to obey him, lets the fellah out of prison, knows who robs them and returns the money, makes trees bear fruit for them; in fact, they say here he is Ali, the Allah, the eye of the sun."

This is really what he said, and as he said it; for I happened to be making a note of a place when he began recounting this history, and wrote it down as he spoke. Though seemingly

ridiculous, yet it is all really true, as they believed; for being a people totally unvisited, the compass and sextants were to them unknown. I did beat one Turk, and had of late, when able, stepped in between the oppressor and the oppressed; perhaps in many instances where I had no business.* After appealing in vain to the authorities against the insult of children singing "Frangee cookoo, Illan aboukoo, Frank cookoo" (curse your father), as I passed along, I beat every child who dared to say so; which, after about fifty had been pretty severely punished, and some ten or twenty remonstrating Turks smartly thrashed, produced the desired result. My rides were naturally to a lazy people extraordinary, and going from Nebbe Meta to the sea, had been necessary to complete some observations I was

* The Ansayri bring fire-wood, milk, butter, cheese, &c. to the town to sell. Turks frequently force this from them at a nominal price. I had often prevented these forced sales. Soldiers would levy a tax on what they met. This I often stopped; for I had several people in the house who stopped a few days, worked as servants, then went,—others coming. They neither expected nor received any reward, save food and lodging. These, most well armed, formed a body too powerful to resist; and at any time they would act just as I commanded,—beat or throw down anybody. However, if I used a lawless power, I sincerely hope I used it only for good.

making, which delay would have spoiled. Even my servants never would believe that the observations, &c., were other than for magical purposes. I remember one evening hearing one who had called me several times to tea, say—"Well, there is something wrong; I left him talking to the moon, which he had put into his black stone; but now he has a star larger than it ought to be there." And if they were asked what the prismatic compass was, while I was using it, they said, "He is asking the sun something." I had also grafted many trees for the different sheiks.

After a short rest I started for the castle of Shogger, leaving my friend, who complained of fatigue, and of sundry wounds which his soft padded saddle seemed to forbid; a very intelligent Christian accompanied me. As we were leaving the town a woman shouted after us: "Give me some of the gold you will find." I said to the servants, "Tell her I will give her all." "May you all die on the road," she replied. The women of Djisser were totally unveiled. Mounting the hill-side above the town, in a northerly direction, we came to a

plain, whose sandy and apparently unproductive soil was well planted with olives ; two hours ride along this height, brought us to the ridge which overlooked the large and flourishing village of Shogger, situated on a lower level. To this we descended ; the water-courses ran about and made the situation beautiful, overlooking the fertile valley beneath, through which dashed several mountain streams. The inhabitants flocked round my servants as we approached, breathless for news of the nizam ; several uttering pretty audible threats on us if we came to enforce it.

Riding to the sheik's house, I was received with great kindness ; and, while sitting, received a visit from the governor of the Djebel Kraudee, Mahomet Aga, who was full of the praises of Colonel Chesney, and the Euphrates expedition ; showing his arms, &c., as pledges of the friendship they had entertained for him. He had been attached to them in some capacity ; I think he said Kavass Bashi ; and was now on his way to Djisser on business with the Pasha, relative to the nizam. After waiting a proper time, I proposed to view the

castle ; all followed : sheik, Moutselim, and people.

The village of Shogger contains nine hundred souls ; it is built on a plain, half-way down the mountain, at the head of the small valley I have already described. A fountain rises just above it, whose waters, traversing the gardens, run down a deep ravine, which separates the village from the neck of rock on which the castle stands.

The houses are mostly built of mud, but are neatly white-washed : some few are of stone ; all have windows, and seem in good repair. The village contains a large and handsome mosque, formerly a church. The population now is entirely Mussulman.

Descending the hillock on which stood the sheik's house, we walked down through the gardens. The people ran up some steps cut in the face of the rock, the only way formerly to the castle, the rock being carefully scarfed smooth elsewhere ; and then we, *i.e.*, Mahomet Aga, the sheik, and a few attendants, scrambled, crawled, and here and there were dragged, up to the top, the road being formed of stones,

fallen from above, bound together by trees, creepers, and bushes. The two castles occupied a long neck of rock, communication being cut off from above with the main rock, as at Sioun, by a deep, broad ditch, cut in the solid rock ; the two sides then fell perpendicularly into ravines on either hand ; below, a bridge, not a foot wide, leads to the lower castle, whose rock terminates in a precipitous point, commanding three meeting ravines ; the upper, they say, is Kalaat el Sultan, the lower, Kalaat el Hareen ; the well I found, by careful observations, verified by measurement, led to the level of the stream below, forming a passage of one hundred and eighty feet through the solid rock.

The castle presented little but ruins, nor was the building by any means to be compared with those I have already described ; I should ascribe it to one of the petty chiefs who established independent principalities. No Frank inscriptions could be found ; they assured me that formerly two boars' heads, carved in stone, stood over the door. Arabic inscriptions there were plenty ; of these, I copied the principal, and give the one most worthy of record. It was written in

an extremely old character, and caused even my learned friend at Latakia, no small trouble to translate. I give a literal translation:—

“In the name of God, the merciful, the beneficent, our chief, the Sultan, the ever victorious, the defender of the faith, the most just, the father of might, Sallahadin Joseph, has ordered this strong-fort to be built.

“May his life be long to protect and give victory to the faith. 507, Hegira.” (1112 A.D.)

I endeavoured to copy the rest, but the crowd and noise totally prevented me. “Do not get into a rage, Ya Beg,” said Mahomet Aga; “I swear by my head they have never seen a Frank before.” We preferred to return the way we came, though the boys dashed down the steps with perfect ease. “Our maidens,” said the sheik, “descend there with a donkey-load on their heads.” On my return to the sheik’s house, he came to me and said his wife had forgotten her senses, and insisted she must see me. I prayed him not to speak of it, that, though decidedly improper, yet for the love I bore him, she might. Accordingly three ladies entered and sat opposite me, closely veiled.

The sheik left the room; then they began to talk and criticise my handkerchief. "It is silk," says one; "no, souf," (a mixture of silk and cotton) says another; and then the first pulled it to prove her words. I stood the scrutiny with great composure, even though it extended rather further than was proper; but veils were forgot, and, seeming to forget my knowledge of their language, they spoke with unbounded freedom. One who seemed the chief, maintained that, being a Frank and white, I was not to be considered a man. When reminded that it was time to go, one said, "*Ya wallah* : I shall never see the beast again; let me know all about him." My northern skin, where it was white, called forth all their abuse; one of them showing her own soft bosom as the standard of perfection. The return of the sheik made them resume their veils and withdraw.

Mahomet Aga lodged in a different house; he came to carry me to dinner, but this the sheik positively forbid. In the middle of the meal, at which all the heads of the village joined, a messenger entered from the Pasha.

After the usual greetings, he was asked to eat, on which he called for a separate tray (these are round flat baskets on which the dishes are served), saying he never eat with a Christian. I said, "You are wise." "Thank God," he said, "I never did." "Your excellency is wise; you know your place; and your good sense, of course, forbids your eating with your betters. Your excellency," I continued, "is not from this village?" "No," he replied; "how do you know that?" "Because I have found all here civil and hospitable, but your tongue shows its dirt before your seat knows you." He then demanded the guest-room of the sheik, who said he saw it was occupied. "I am on duty; I have been insulted; I will have it." When the servants entered to turn him out, he slunk off, begging me not to complain of him to the Pasha. I heard afterwards Mahomet Aga had him beaten for his insolence.

In the evening all the neighbours flocked in, and it passed most agreeably. Mahomet Aga related to me his history. He was a Moor of Tunis. There his father fell into disgrace, and went to Algiers, where they arrived just as the

French attacked the place. “As,” he observed, “my father and myself saw at once there was no hope for us in a war against men who were paid to fight, who cared not whether the war lasted ten years or twenty, we started again, and joined the service of Ibrahim Pasha.” He spoke with enthusiasm of the expedition to the Euphrates, and begged me to tell him if all the employés of government were as honest as they. He begged me to drink some brandy, saying his other English friends always did, and he felt sure I did not, from delicacy. On my offering him some, he refused it, but an old man begged some “for his eyes,” and drank it eagerly, saying, he had long felt if he could get stuff like that he should be cured. The fears of the nizam were great, and justly so, among the married men. One young man said, “I have three wives and nine children; how can I go? Must I shut my house? Oh God, what am I to do?”

Started with the light to return to Djisser, which I reached about eight. The consul would not be induced to move; he had fallen on fat prey, and was eating money fast. Oh,

Levantines! Oh, Ibn Arab! During my previous visit, the Greek priest had applied to me for protection under the following circumstances:—A Turk laying claim to a field, from time immemorial the property of the Church, Turk witnesses were brought, the case tried, and the Turk occupied the land. I said if he would point out how I could serve him, I would try my poor best, and so I left him. On my return, the consul said, “Ah, all is settled:” he has proceeded thus:—the Turk was summoned as one to draw lots to go to the nizam,—the consul says, “Sign this paper and I will save you:” so the fellow signs a paper, saying the land never was his,—the consul is Greek, the inspecting doctor for the recruits is Greek: they talk together a long while; each is full of virtue, has a horror of bribes. The priest visits them, returns hot, rather low, complains of poverty. The Turk at night leads a horse into the consul’s stables, he goes out carrying a bridle; the next day the Turk is pronounced as having a taint of scrofula, and rejected,—the land is secured to the Church, the——and the——to the Greeks, and I recognise the horse among

the consul's stud. The consul had also used my name.

On the previous eve had arrived the Pasha, the military Pasha, appointed to collect the conscription; with him are two hundred soldiers, who are not quartered in the khan, but billeted on the town; twenty are accordingly sent to the Christian house, where the consul was staying; in fact, about one hundred of the two hundred are quartered among the seven Christian families. The consul directly writes to say that a great Englishman, son of a greater Englishman, had gone to visit the castle, leaving him who accompanied this great man as secretary, to await his return, and that now the Mussulman had sent twenty soldiers to the house, already overcrowded. The aide-de-camp of the Pasha called immediately, begged a thousand pardons, drove off the troopers with abuse, saying, "You know his Highness's orders; never to touch a Christian:" and the other families were likewise relieved from their thankless burden.

On my arrival, the Pasha was in the mosque drawing the nizam.—This word has so often

been used by me, it will perhaps be better to explain the whole system.

The word *nizam* means regular soldier, and is applied to the army—as “He is in the *nizam*,” or “The *nizam* did so and so.” This force is levied by conscription; formerly there was no regularity in the system, but lately, a census of males (merely an approximate one) was taken throughout the dominions of the Sultan; that is to say, among those who would permit it. In the western provinces, the people of the Amanus Bylan, and north and east, would not allow it. The Christian sects are exempt from all military services, paying a tax for exemption, called *haredge*; but all other sects have to serve. The names of all males were entered but a separate list was made of those from twenty to twenty-five years of age. This all complain to be most unfair. Nobody knows any body’s proper age; so the persons appointed seem to have written down the least age the fellow would bear—thus forty became twenty-five—thirty—twenty-three—seventeen, on the contrary, became twenty. This list is taken to a military Pasha, who proceeds to draw the

levy—about ten per cent. every six months may be the number. Thus, such a village is to send six—sixty being written. These repair to the place where the Pasha is, and draw. This time, also, a reserve force, whose destination seems doubtful, was drawn. The chosen remain: the lucky ones return home. They draw lots from a bag, but much unfairness is said to be used; and who that has been in Turkey can presume to deny it? Any body drawn may buy a substitute, but here a substitute is very expensive.

In some places one may be procured for 5*l.*; and the Yezidis, who, from religious prejudices will not serve, always buy them. The period of service is five years, and the following five years he must serve if the reserve is called for. Altogether the soldiers are well treated, fairly paid, and fed; yet the horror of the service is excessive. Mothers produce abortion; the young maim themselves: it is the *bête-noire* of the population. It is remarkable that no class among the various sects it is drawn from, is exempt; a great sheik's son is drawn just as a common man. This, of course, does not apply

to the Turks, though very few of them even are exempt. One wise rule they have made—any body who is not present to draw is considered a deserter, and becomes a soldier from the moment of drawing. In the morning they had cried from the mosques for all to come to draw, and the road I had passed was thronged with villagers, women, and children. They generally cursed me dreadfully, saying, “the Franks were the cause of it.” The curse causeless will not come.

Off again about noon. Crossed the bridge over the Orontes. There is an Arabic inscription on it. The arches are far too small and low for the body of water, and the bridge curves from the stream; which they have chosen to span in one of the widest parts. There must be a considerable difference in the height of the water above and below. Excellent fish abounds, the river had overflowed over the broad swampy plain south and a little east, and enters among some detached hills, skirting the regular range. Passed south of the tel and village of Aneeb (Grapes), ascended the mountain, and halted at the large fine village of Arneba.

Some Christians of the village had met me, and insisted on escorting me back. They seemed well used by their Mussulman neighbours, and spoke kindly of the sheik. There are but seven families, and they now and then have a priest from Edlip. I have never in the country met with Christian natives in whose favour I was so much impressed as these. When we met them on the road, a servant was riding some distance before me, who shouted to them to give him what bread he had. They handed him several flat cakes, and he rode on. I had already threatened the fellow several times, for he is always exacting from others. To give him his due, however, he is very impartial; for he takes without any reference to creed. I struck him one day for taking a pipe from an Ansayri, saying, "You shall not take from the Fellah." The next day he took something from a Turk, saying, "I had not told him not to take from them." He says, "The Beg will starve some day; he will take nothing." In fact, I have given up scolding the fellow, and he will not leave me.

As the people passed me, I told Abdallah to

pay them for the bread: they said, "Ya Beg, do not disgrace us: why do you hate us? will you not eat our bread? We are Christians also: we are your brothers." After thanking the sheik, and giving him my jowse nargilleh (hubble-bubble) for his kindness to the Christians, and assuring him he would prosper for it, I crossed the country east to Djerade, a town of the lower empire, now in ruins, 2' from Arneba.

The ruins, though those of a considerable town, had little of interest, but over the whole the country around arid, stony, barren, iron, sterile; and then, the silence of the wilderness! A sudden destruction seemed to have fallen on the solitary town; the houses not perishing by slow decay, no mouldering ruin telling of vicissitudes, desertion, or extinction; but stones, fresh as yesterday—no lichen-covered walls—no ivy winding up the broken gable—but as if a race were building and a blast had swept them off even in the midst of their work. The houses were probably destroyed by an earthquake, as stones and walls were turned and wrenched most singularly.

A thing that much struck me was the total absence of wood in the interior of the houses : such, at least, as were standing were notched as if for the reception of beams : many were vaulted ; these required no beams ; but many were not, or showed the ruin of the vault. The country about was sharp rock, with small sweet grass or clover between ; the pieces of rock, standing two, four, or eight feet high. The ruins being built of the same it was difficult to see where they began and where they ended. The rock had been cut away or used to suit the building as much as it could : here half the wall, there all the floor as solid rock. In many, three walls, or even the four exterior walls, were standing ; the roofs, judging by the gables, were all sloping.

I found the church, but it presented no architectural beauties or peculiarities : the walls were of stones, some two to three feet square on the face, and eighteen or twenty inches thick, utterly uncemented : they were, however, well cut and fitted close to each other. Over one door was a cross : one house was less ruined than the rest ; its base was all on the

solid rock ; the rooms were perfect ; and at the backs, an open yard, with a pretty colonnade, a horse-trough, and place for tying the halter still remained.

On entering one of the vaults, of which there were many, I was surprised to see a turban over the edge of a sarcophagus, then a musket barrel. I was too far in the place to run away, so I shouted, "Come out ; come here." A man showed himself. After a little conversation, it appeared he was a poor fellow hiding from the conscription : his present woe was want of food ; his wife had promised to supply him, but appeared already to have forgotten her hidden love. We supplied the want, and promised not to denounce him.

Rode from this on to Baleson, half an hour north by west, passing other ruins on either hand. The whole district bore the same barren, stricken appearance. Baleson is an inhabited village, and the houses mingle with those of the old town. There is a mosque with a low square steeple, now used as a minaret, and near it a house with the staff and scroll still over the door. There are also many other ruins. An hour's

ride south-easterly brought me to the heights below which lies Caffir-el-Barah (the village of the just, or the wilderness of the just):* it lies in a valley and extends full two miles in length; from outskirt to outskirt probably even three. The appearance of this valley of the city of the past renewed with tenfold vigour the feelings I had experienced on viewing Djerade: it seemed, indeed, as if fulfilled prophecy was acting before me; as if a curse had been passed upon the land, and that curse fulfilled—"Thy cities shall be laid without habitation, and I will make thy cities desolate, for every city shall be forsaken, not a man shall dwell therein."

Slowly I rode through the breadth of this city of the void, and felt a great relief when I emerged on the further side and began mounting the valley to the modern Mussulman village of the same name. There seemed something awful in this wandering about the city of the departed—not the dead: death is decay, ruin: here was none: it was desolation—utter

* *Caffir* must not be confounded with *Caffre*: the first means "wilderness, desert place;" the second, "infidel."

desolation. A wretched dome of rubble and mortar covers the body of a Mussulman saint. Wonder that he rests in such a place: better far roll into one of the large fine empty sarcophagi below. I explored the castle as it stands in utter solitude amidst an olive plantation. It is as a whole that this place must be viewed; separately there is little worthy of notice.

Entering the village, which occupies the hill on the northern side of the valley, there is a large collection of mud houses. I went to the sheik's house, who, receiving me kindly, said, "Ah, Ya Beg, so you have returned to see the land of your fathers." "Egad, no, sheik; had it been so, you would not have been here kneeling on the felt." "Why?" "Because they were tough men of war and renown, who knew better how to take, than how to yield a land. No; you took it from those Greeks." "It was God gave it us." The castle has evident traces of being Saracenic: the fallen blocks prevent all access to the interior, which consists of a two-storied building. It is further surrounded by a wall with masqued loop-holes; but the wall is neither lofty nor very

thick, and there is no trace of an exterior ditch.

I had fallen amongst a set of dreadful braggarts. The conscription having been drawn, those that remained were relieved from all their present fears. They had heard a report of the Russian threats with regard to the Magyars, and said that were the Sultan attacked, they would all march to the defence of Islam. I asked them why : during the former war, they had not done so ; but on my saying at last, that I would mention at Aleppo (whither I was going,) their martial ardour and praiseworthy desire of serving the great Padishah, they became mindful of love for their own homes, and prayed me to forget their vapourings.

They were fully persuaded we were tributaries of the Sultan, and asked me how we chose the virgin whom the sovereign of England yearly presented to the embraces of the Commander of the Faithful. To this, however, we have a ready answer to hurl at them, that even their shallow intellect cannot fail to understand. “Ibrahim Pasha ; he defeats your nizam ; he destroys the armies of your invincible Padishah. Do you

remember Nezeeb? Do you remember Homs? Five thousand English effect what Sultan, sheik, Islam, and nizam cannot do; and drive out Ibrahim from the country." Then you are caught again, for they say, "It was God's work: we could not stand against them, so he ordered you—his tributaries—to do it for us."

CHAPTER VIII.

A Christian's feelings in the East—Melancholy ruins at Aleppo—Description of the Houses—Stone Sarcophagi—Serai el Melek—Caffir-el-Barah—Subterranean adventure—Natives of Djebel Kaiha—Kaiha—Edlip—Departure from Edlip—Eternal features of the East—Lady Hester Stanhope—Bad Government of the Turks—Free Language of the People—Broken spirit of the Christians—Articles in English news papers—Vile treatment of Women—Losses of the Christians—Proposals for repayment—Causes of the rising—Turks educated in Europe—Insult to a Christian Woman—The Mussulmans' loss—The Zapties.

THE rising sun had not poured a ray on the town below when we began to explore its desolation. The object would have been better achieved from the hill. The effect would not have then been destroyed, and there one might have gazed and departed with a lesson of our nothingness; not perhaps without profit. It seemed a sneaking thing to wander over a city of the Cross—to tread on ruins stamped with the ensign of our faith—in friendly converse with the destroyer, in amity with the base foes of our Redeemer—to take advantage of the absence of the rightful proprietor and pry into his homely parlour. The Christians whom I

had met on the road the day before still accompanied me. One said, and perhaps rightly, (who knows?) "This was my father's home." He longed to say, in the words of the prophet, "Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive yards, and their houses; also the hundredth part of the money, and of the oil, of the corn, and of the wine that ye exact of them." Let us trust, however, that the wild olive of infidelity will be grafted into the true vine. That He will reward the patient sufferings, the long bitter degradations of his followers in this land, who can dare to doubt?

The ruins had been cleared and formed the walls of gardens of olives and vines, so the simile struck me with peculiar force. The olive often grew in the chamber, pressing its fruitful branches through door and lattice: the vine crept stealthily over hearth-stone and threshold, as if anxious to bind together these once cherished places of the ancient lord. In some places whole rows of house fronts were standing; nor was it till you looked within that all was seen to be ruin and desolation.

The doors were generally guarded by a niche at either side, and many portions of the ruins struck me as bearing a striking resemblance to the plain unornamented parts of Palmyra. The houses, built as those I have before described, of one stone thick uncemented, were generally two stories high, the lower story rooms, low broad arches. On these had been planked floors, at least, so I should judge by the niches for the supporting rafters.

The generality were not large; two rooms below and two above, the front unornamented, save the niches and an ogee over the door. The windows above square and well-sized; sometimes over the door were stars, circles, or Catherine-wheels. And here, as I wander, the partridge now calls from the high corner of honour; the quail nestles in the ladies' chamber: such is the end of the wear, the strife, the ambition of our lives! To the south-east are two remarkable pyramids, about thirty feet high each; they are built entirely of the pale stone of the place: the roof, pyramidal in form, is likewise built of blocks of stone, as elsewhere not a particle of wood, iron, or lead

is found. This much heightens the effect of the ruins; of wood we can know the probable date of its use by its state of preservation; but here stands a city perfect as the day it was begun: as far, I mean, as the individual stones are concerned: and even where blast or earthquake has cast them down, there they lie sharp as if the echo of the chisel stroke yet sounded on the hill, or the decayed, long powerless dust was still the vigorous arm and skilful hand.

Even these pyramids have felt a shock and been much shaken; and a very slight one now would bring them down. Within they may be ten or twelve feet square, and contain each five large stone sarcophagi, uncovered and opened: the lids of all, if they had any, are gone; though, unless broken, they must have been far too large to have passed out of the door.

Near these pyramids stood a long building, with Corinthian pilasters, the ornaments boldly but not deeply cut; the interior was completely filled with blocks of stone; of its use I am able to form no opinion. There were several less

public buildings, one with a screen wall before it, and two or three churches of the usual Syrian form. One row of houses is perfect; it consists of a line of five, contained in a court walled in, with a door of entrance at each end; an open colonnade, supported on demi-pillars, runs along the front. Over each was the monogram $\Lambda \Omega$ and a cross, with the episcopal staff: they were larger than the houses generally. Apart on the east is a large house, still nearly perfect. I took a sketch of it, as one of the largest and most perfect; it is called by the natives the Judge's House.

On the west, in the midst of a fine garden, perfectly clear of ruins, so, probably, formerly as now, a garden, walled in by high pallisadoes of slabs of rock, is what is now called the King's Palace, Serai-el-Melek. Of the palace itself nothing remains but a confused mass of columns, shafts, capitals, and stones. In the rocks on each side of the valley are numerous tombs, some with courts, others with open colonnades, but in the empty tombs one finds no record of their history. There were several inscriptions in barbarous Greek; of these I

copied one ; it was on the largest of what I should judge the public buildings.

With subdued feelings and humbled pride, late in the afternoon I quitted this solitary place of thousands. What avail all our stores, our toils, our labours for this world's goods, this world's applause—for “this day thy soul shall be required of thee!” breathes in every murmur of the groves around. Are such as these were, the creatures whose praise we toil for?—where are their soft words now? A mighty spirit breathes over the land ; “Go forth !” it said ; and they melted away, nor left a wreck, a trace, a footprint behind.”

My companion was full of some curious speculations whereby he could gain ground,* so he left me to my meditations. The sheik had no tradition, “Min zemen, kadeem,” lengthening the last syllable out, to reach the long ago he meant to indicate. He knew it was Kaffir el Barah, and that was all. I had said the Franks did not build it ; “I was wise, and knew best ;” so bidding farewell, we started for Reiha.

* The Christian's idea that it was formerly his village, had touched his weak part ; and he was half inclined to claim property here, as his family's by old right, backing the request with his consular power.

Already I have paused too long amidst these ruins ; suffice it then, to add, my companion flew back to trade, and left me to wander on, which I did for many days, visiting nearly all the ruins in Djebel Erbayen, or the “Mountain of Forty ;” tradition says forty spirits are locked in a cave there, and none may descend. Of course I made a desperate effort on my return, to explore the haunts of the Jinns ; but guides, servants—all fled ; and it was said I had met the foul fiend himself, who had driven me back. We had entered it, *i. e.*, myself, two servants, and four natives, with torches of pine, and two wax candles in lanterns. Preceding my ready-to-run-away followers, I advanced. We soon lost sight of day, and with it their hope, too, dropped off. The bats began to fly about ; our glare disturbed them ; the guides, two Christians, said, “ though there was nothing in it, yet it was wrong.” I said, “ Go.” My servant begged to be allowed to wait for me there ; he had hurt his foot ; so I went on with Mahmoud, the groom, who feared nothing, and, shouted “ To hell with you ! face the Bey, devil, if you dare ! ” He waved his club in one hand, his torch in the other, and we now

advanced, though slowly ; having to climb over rocks, often coming back to the same place. I stuck up one of the lanterns to serve, as the sailors would say, as a point of departure ; the bats dashed it out in a moment. Many of these flew against our faces and breasts with great violence. My hands being employed guarding the lantern I carried, against which they flew oftenest, there was nothing for it but patience. We had gone on round and round, now confident, now bothered, as we arrived by a new route at an old spot, for about an hour, when something struck me on the chest ; I staggered back, Mahmoud's protecting club, aimed with violence at the darkness, smashed the lantern and finished its career on my breast. We had dreadful work to cross back to the entrance, where we arrived to be objects of distrust to all. My face was a good deal cut with glass and the club. Mahmoud said we had not had fair play, when they questioned him. I said what was the truth, for I took care to ascertain the fact, that a stone loosened by the bats fell and sent me back, when the club completed my downfall. This he denied, saying, "he saw a mighty stone club smash the lantern, and

two eyes grinned over me as I lay on the ground."

I subsequently explored it, but must own I failed in finding any direct end; but this was chiefly owing to my being bothered by getting into separate passages, and finding myself in a *cul-de-sac*. The natives say it extends seventeen hours into the earth. The cave is a natural formation, and a natural consequence of the peculiar nature of the rock; the entrance has been cut and smoothed.

There is another cave at the top of the Djebel, which I felt no anxiety to explore, being rather tired of a journey promising such small results and so much fatigue; I had likewise been bitten by a snake, and in my fears had cauterised the wound so severely, that a return to a town or place for rest was necessary.

The natives of the Djebel Reiha of which the Erbayeen forms a part, are chiefly Mussulmans, and their features mark them as of Arab, not of Turkoman blood. The dress also of the women is different from that on the western side of the Syrian mountains, being chiefly of blue cotton, with red gowns and dark coloured veils; the shift also is gene-

rally lined with red, and in many, embroidered. The whole, as usual with Mussulman population, exhibit more wealth, or rather affluence, than any other sect or race.

From Barah the country continues the same ; sterile, iron, doomed to waste ; here and there a valley afforded room for the plough, and a peasant from some distant village might be lazily seen turning up the soil ; near these fertile spots would generally be a ruin of an ancient house, a church, and sometimes a pyramidal tomb, similar to those at Barah. On my road from Barah to Reiha I saw six ruined towns and only six living persons. How sad the waste that has fallen on this once fruitful land. The present town of Reiha is well situated on the western slope of the mountains, olive grounds and gardens stretching out below it.

Reiha was burnt in 1812, by the Pasha of Aleppo, or rather the son of a chief who had made himself Pasha, (successful rebellion is always honoured by the Porte,) yet it seems a flourishing place. The road from thence descends to the plain of Edlip, which is on a higher level than that to the east. On the

latter I could count at one time eleven large villages, yet four-fifths of what had existed even fifty years ago are now ruined and deserted.*

We now advanced through olive grounds to Edlip, a large and flourishing town prettily situated on the slope of a hill ; like Sermein it receives its supplies of water from reservoirs, there being but one spring and the waters of that very brackish. The population is mostly Mahometan, but some few families of Greek Christians reside here. A good deal of soap is manufactured ; the native cottons are likewise brought here to be bleached ; and the people make shoes which are sent to Aleppo for sale. Took up my quarters at a khan, being freer there than with the Aga, who kindly pressed me to remain with him. He staid the evening with me, which we passed very agreeably. He had been much employed in various parts of his master's empire, and had a map—the first and

* On hastily running over these notes, previous to their being sent to England, I find omitted a remark I made at Kaffir-el-Bareh. Before a house there, is a stone on which are cut the eight holes for the present Arabic game of Dama. Such would hardly have been cut here by the present inhabitants : it invests the game with an antiquity its intrinsic worth hardly deserves.

last Turk I ever saw with one; it was published at Cairo. Edlip is quite a modern town, the old town a ruin, about three miles off.

Being so near, it seemed a pity not to re-visit Aleppo, so the sun found us on our road. We left Edlip with the newly-drawn conscripts, who were still in their peasant's dresses: the music of the town drum, beaten vigorously, clarionets trying to squeak them down, preceded the melancholy procession: children women, fathers, elders, all surrounded them, wailing and weeping. They dared not curse the Sultan, so they turned all their wrath on me—whose only object was to pass through as quietly as possible; and their curses produced retorts from the servants, who trod down one energetic curser in the very height of his volubility, and exposed the memory of the false prophet* to terms the most opprobrious.

The road lay over a plain wasting its fatness; here and there were rocky patches, but all else

* *Illan Mahometak* is a term none dare use. On one occasion a Tiyari Christian I had as servant, was seized for using the expression. I got the Aga to own that the man, he said so to, was a bad man, therefore no true follower of the mighty Prophet. Having owned this, I said, you cannot punish this poor fellow; he only cursed *his* Mahomet, who, of course, is some other man of that name.

was one splendid field for cultivation. The wheat already, however, wastes for want of rain; and if they have none soon, there will, all say, be a famine in the land. A great deal of ground was untilled, really for want of inhabitants. We passed several villages, each built on tels—to me the formation of these seems natural, and hardly justifies the idea that each is the site of an ancient city; each is probably the site of an ancient village. As Warburton most justly remarks, immutability is the characteristic of the East: as his father built, so the son; as the father ploughed, reaped, ate, slept, thought, died;—the son ploughs, reaps, eats, sleeps, thinks, and dies; where the father lived the son will live, unless forced by some strong outward pressure to migrate. Thus we see a village with a few families of some sect foreign to the mass; they are the phantoms of the old race clinging to the ruins of the past. Reading Xenophon, we are struck with the wonderfully accurate account of the present in his history of the past. The villages, houses, yards, dirt, pots and pans, are pictures of to-day; to each village of the empire we may assign the like antiquity.

Each family throws its dirt before the door ; as years grow on the mass enlarges, the mound becomes solid as its age increases ; the house, at best a crazy ruin, rots to uselessness, the old is deserted and a new built on the mound ; henceforth the dirt is cast down, the ruin, half mud half stones, swells the mass—each village does the same ; thus the village gradually mounts on its ever-growing hill. Many years ago, I visited the house of Lady Hester Stanhope, it was perfect then : when last I made my pilgrimage there, it was a grass-grown mound, where here and there only a portion of a wall stood up as record to bear witness to the past days gone by. Even the roofs alone are sufficient to bury the small remnants of walls which stand up against the shock of their fall.

At noon we halted at a Mussulman village, where the sheik received me with great kindness ; he denied that any of his people had participated in the revolt of Aleppo, observing “ When we were poor, we robbed, now we are easy in our circumstances, we dare not : ” thus inadvertently learning the first grand lesson in natural economy. The rest of my road I had traversed

before, and was very glad to find myself on a divan in Aleppo, safe for a time from sun, dust, and heat.

All the thoughts of the residents at Aleppo were, when another rising would take place; the Turks had been beaten, but not subdued; their leaders, or rather many who had made themselves most prominent in the pillage, had been banished. The conscription had been drawn, and they felt that they had made a sad bungle of the affair: all this irritated and galled them, and it was generally known that they waited but a favourable opportunity to throw themselves with increased hate on the Christians. There can be no worse government than that of the Turks; for the delicate task of appeasing an excited people, they can kill, massacre, destroy, pillage, rob, lie, and abuse to perfection; but as to feeling the temper of the beaten, distracting their thoughts, reviving their spirits, conciliating or helping, such a thing is utterly incompatible with their natures. The Pasha sits in his serai; he can never hear the truth; and as among them from first to last money is the sole object, to obtain that to day,

they would leave burning a light that would blow them up to-morrow.

Walking freely about during my stay ; understanding the two languages in use, it amazes me to hear the conversation in families ; the talk of the bazaars, of the caffinets. Everywhere, with soldiers and police sitting by, remarks were made which even in free-spoken grumbling old England would have lodged a man in prison upon a diet of bread and water.

A Christian and Mahometan prophecy had named the day next following the one after my arrival, as that on which a rising was to take place ; as the eve approached the fears of the poor Christians were terrible ; it seemed incredible that men could be such cowards : resistance was a word undreamt of in their utmost fancies. One or two young men were said to have died of fright. Yet they had foreseen this for weeks, had money to purchase arms, which were plentiful in the shops, had houses, natural fortresses. When spoken to, they regarded me with wonder. "It is no use: for us there is no hope." "What," I replied, "are you men?—will you see your wives, your daughters, violated,

your sons murdered, and not strike one blow?"

They gazed and passed on. May we not look at this as a great principal cause whereby five thousand Mussulmans were enabled to conquer this populous country, then overflowing with wealth? Their church also inculcated a passiveness, a submission, that has done more injury to them than all the swords and oppressions of the Turk. They must not boldly resist, bravely struggle and die: but they may lie, fawn, creep, sneak, prevaricate, and abuse.

The question has often been put to me "How? you a Christian, and fight? you a follower of Him who says, 'When smitten on one side turn the other,' and return blows for blows?" Nor could I find any direct solution of the question, though aware that our Church excited the people, and nobly used its vast powers when England was threatened with invasion. The Turks on the other hand waited: they wished somebody to begin, though eager and ready, and the prompt musket probably in reach of the listless hand, seemingly too lazy to grasp the pipe: any noise, and they would have flown on

their prey. So passed the night without any disturbance: a few of us had resolved to join in, and strike in these degenerate days a brave Crusading blow; but the opportunity, happily for all, came not.

Many contradictory articles appeared in the papers. I was shown, however, some in the *Times* written by an English merchant, Mr. C——, which describes the whole with truth and candour; he is a good Christian and a gentleman; one well worthy to rank among the merchant princes of Great Britain. Hundreds, I say the truth; hundreds found refuge in his house, one of the enormous khans of Aleppo; were fed and lodged till all danger was passed. During the pillage he entered the Christian quarter, and succeeded in bringing off several persons, himself disarming a leader of the mob who interrupted his benevolent purpose. Since then he has exerted himself in every way for their good: supplying some with this, others with that—things necessary for them; providing the poor Jacobite bishop with a horse, to enable him to retire from the country. Another writer, on the contrary, depreciated the damage done,

the violations, &c., saying but one woman had appeared before the Pasha to complain of violence. One can only ascribe the latter to the Turk himself; as generally the woman even though violated does not appear before the public functionary to apprise the world of it; still less would she appear publicly before a Turkish Pasha, who holds all women as brutes, and the Christian woman as his own when he chooses, or dares, (there's the secret) to take her. Girls at Aleppo *were* carried off: and forced to journey to the Desert: there thrown from one to the other, from chief to muleteer; till, cast off, they wandered back idiots to their homes; happier even thus, than had reason been left them to contemplate there the wreck of all that makes life precious.

Are there no other crimes among the list, degrading, deadly? These were practised in the streets, under the broad light of day. The churches, and these I visited, were gutted and burnt; the very floor torn up by the infuriated pillagers; the houses also were not only cleared out, but destroyed, and smoking ruins now alone remain.

The following is as near the truth as possibly may be attained :—

Losses of the Christians in Aleppo, with amount of damage sustained :—		Piastres.	£
Greek Schismatic . .	Church destroyed, valued at	750,000	7,000
	2 shops pillaged } claim . .	624,541	6,800
	34 families . . }		
Greek Catholic . . .	Church destroyed, valued at	759,412	7,150
	25 shops . . . } claim . .	5,316,357	53,000
	209 families . . }		
Armenian Catholic . .	Church destroyed, valued at	220,700	5,300
	134 families, claim	1,836,966	
Armenian Schismatic .	Bishop lost	1,025	9 <i>l.</i> 7 <i>s.</i>
	61 families, claim	272,966½	2,500
Syrian Catholics . . .	Church destroyed, valued at	746,617	7,000
	1 shop } claim . .	1,227,305½	10,000
	110 families . . }		
Syrian Jacobites . . .	Bishop lost	19,022	150
	4 families, claim	58,283½	520
Maronites	Church destroyed, valued at	51,200	450
	8 shops } claim . .	1,397,030	11,000
	120 families . . }		
16 Latin families		128,774	1,080
The reparation of the churches is calculated at . .		3,000,000	18,500
Total		15,430,095½	

Women and girls violated, 60; killed in the massacre, 15; died of wounds received, 42; houses plundered, 688; houses burnt, 12; churches burnt, 3.

At the period of my visit, in April, about 10,000*l.* of Christian property had been restored, *i. e.*, handed to the bishops, the Pasha pronouncing this all. A full indemnity having been promised by the Sultan, the Christians were not satisfied with this, and petitioned the Pasha for permission to go to Constantinople to appeal to the Sultan, but passports were peremptorily

denied them. They have written to the Porte, but no answer has been given. A day was fixed for the repayment of the indemnity, and for the rendering of all property to the Christians that had been plundered from them. This expired the day before my arrival, and then a little less than 4000*l*. more was forthcoming. The Pasha talks of a forced contribution on the Mussulmans, with a view of intimidating them.

The Christians he likewise has endeavoured to prevail on to accept a less sum than that demanded. No doubt many have overrated their losses. One, I was told, who crouches under our flag, lays claim to 1000*l*. when one hundred pence would pay his damage; but, generally, the estimate has been made conscientiously, and subsequently undergone the inspection and revision of the bishop. A jewel was taken to the Pasha, and he had it valued, then referred to the list, where he found it put down at a price infinitely below its real value; the man saying he feared the Pasha might say a Christian could not have a jewel of such value, and be offended with him.

While we remember the perfect bijou of a divan, and the gay balls of Mohammed Pasha in London, we must not forget he was Pasha at Jerusalem, and there left a character which no champagne or polkas can efface.

The causes of the rising originally may be traced to the history of Aleppo, and a good deal to the present conduct of the Christians themselves. Slaves become naturally tyrants, and in Aleppo they did their best to revive the ancient enmity. Singularly enough, the Jews remained untouched; some whisper that they helped or rather urged the Turks on; and a consul of some European power, a Jew, predicted the affair with a precision that looks very like collusion. At first, promises were made of perfect indemnity for all losses, and that all Turks, from twenty to forty, should be taken for the nizam. The first term has not been, nor unless Christians in Europe stir, will it be, fulfilled; the second has not nor ever will: the same proportion only was drawn as from any other place; and it seems certain that the instant the force at Aleppo is diminished, the Turks will rise again.

Are such things to be permitted in the nineteenth century, protected as it were by Europe,—by England first of all? “Moslem once, Moslem ever,” as the Greek maxim says. No reform can touch a Turk—witness those educated in France and in England; they return to their country instructed, certainly to a certain extent, too much so probably to believe in the rhapsodies of the Prophet; but how far have they gone beyond? They have added atheism to their fathers’ prejudices; they drink fearlessly, and, in six months, fairly out-Turk the Turk. — A conqueror—the Moslem was great; no mercy, no remorse, clogged, for a second, their chariots of triumph; but for the slow march of mind, the slow tedious path of improvement, he is unfit. For years this reform has been going on, and its result is Aleppo. Nor would it have been confined to Aleppo. Every Moslem heart in Arabistan beat high to be allowed to seize their prey, their own lawful prey; which the Franks had so long withheld from them.

“It is lawful, it is right, to attack the honour, (woman too is comprised,) faith, and wealth of the Christian:” this cry echoes in every Moslem

breast: let him dare, and he will shout it as loudly as ever.

Let me mention a circumstance that occurred at Latakia during my stay. A beggar used to parade the streets; he slept here and there, as he could, and had arrived at an almost entire state of nudity, wearing only a short jacket: he was a young lusty man, but I supposed liked the life; nor was he madder than any body else. He entered the bath one day while the women were there; a Christian's wife, *enceinte* at the time, fainted, and fear (for he entered in his nudity) brought on a miscarriage. The Turkish women, the wives of the Cadi, the Mufti, and two other great men, took him and washed him. The Christian whose wife had received the shock, complained to the Medjilis; their answer was, "Are not our wives better than yours? who is she that she speaks? our wives were there; they do not complain:" and so the affair ended. On a subsequent visit to the kaimakan, he asked me, "Any news, Ya Beysader?" "Plenty," I replied; "it is worth while living here if they will only do the same every day." "What! what!" "Oh the story of

Sheik Mustapha ; it beats tainzamat ; I have got all the particulars." They begged and prayed me not to mention it ; first they denied it, but I said, " Sheik Mustapha told it me himself, and he says the Cadi's * wife is the prettiest woman among them." It cost me full twelve visits and eighty coffees and nargillehs ; for all intrigued for me to forego my tale ; but I maintained it would be a crime to hide such a rich trait of manners. However, it produced one good : Sheik Mustapha was banished, and the bath is to be respected in future.

With regard to the punishment the Mussulmans received at Aleppo, it was also severe—probably about one-fifth that they inflicted on the Christians. The bombardment did hardly any harm, nor can I conceive how so many shots can have been fired with so little effect. The day or night before the soldiers sacked the two rebel quarters, most of the valuables, the women, &c., were sent to the Mussulman quarters in

* The Cadi, who was by at the time, was a great fanatic ; he looked pale as I recounted the particulars of his wife's washing the beast, and at last fairly gasped with agony. An intrigue between a man like this and one of their wives ; they would regard as blessed,—a child by him a holy gift. I remarked this man was mad enough always to attach himself to the youngest and handsomest.

the other extremity of the town ; so the soldiers found less than they hoped, and the worst effects of a sack was spared the people. It is hard to get Turkish troops to act against the Turkish population—very naturally so, and it speaks in their favour. The irregulars, the Zapties, maintained their own renown, and a Hungarian officer present said he never saw men pitch themselves better home in the charge than they did. None of the Hungarians were allowed to interfere. Probably, had General Bem's offer been taken, the whole might have been spared.

CHAPTER IX.

Destruction of Syrian Manuscripts—Grand review of troops—The Yezidis—Confusion of races and faith—Visit from a despised Wife—Solicits a spell to kill—Range of Amanus—Convent of St. Simon Stylites—St. Simon Stylites—Tennyson's Poem—Inspection of the building—Madness of St. Simon—A beautiful apparition—Domestic felicity—Arabic Robinson Crusoe—Bid farewell to my friends—Numerous Sarcophagi—Namous-el-Melek—Kaa—Beau-ideal of an Oriental—Mussulmans oppressed—Primal beauty of nature—Dress of the different races—Ruins at Youngis Shi—Ranges of the Beltan—Distant View of Antioch—Fulfilment of prophecy.

THE churches have as yet been untouched. It was sad to wander amidst these ruins, and the Syrian library, so rich, so valuable, is still a mass of burnt paper and shrivelled parchment. In it were many valuable Syrian manuscripts. All requests that they would collect and preserve the fragments were unavailing; many were still perfect, having escaped the flames; others were singed; some only torn and scattered—many, hard matters of shrivelled skins. No endeavour has been made to collect them: despair had paralysed every energy. At the period of my visit the Roman Catholic school had just met

for the first time since the massacre. It was sad to see the children sitting on portions of mat, burnt and torn, in a room gutted to the stone of the walls. Through the naked fire-blackened iron bars of the windows appeared the roofless, spoiled church; while above, the eye fell on the stripped walls of the Patriarch's house; then on to the pure blue sky, all too spotless to have witnessed such scenes.

Thursday, 27th March.—Off. The morning was ushered in by a grand review of the troops, who, not having received any pay for fourteen months, fired away 80*l.* or 100*l.* worth of powder. It caused a great sensation, being deemed by many a fresh rising. There were about 4000 soldiers in Aleppo, but so detached and scattered were their quarters and subdivided their members, that they might easily have been surprised. It was pleasant to breathe the fresh air of the country, free from the pestilent air of fanaticism, despair, and wailings; and emboldened by the change, I took my way straight across field and waste, for the Djebel Simon, whose summit was visible in the distance. N.W. it was—N.W. I went. My course soon

left the plain, and led over rocky hills. In four and a half hours, or about 18' from Aleppo, reached the ruined town of Meshabar, which has a convent and church still standing.

The convent is large and handsome, three stories high, and wants but the roof to render it perfect. Observed two other ruins on the hills to the north. The country now became again of the same rocky, desolate description as that of Richa. The patches of cultivation few and far between. Here and there we met wild Yezidis, shepherds tending flocks, tamer than themselves, enveloped in their huge shapeless felts. These felts, made of sheep's wool, beaten and rolled, are so stiff as to stand upright when placed on the ground. The upper part is lined with felt, and slit down the middle. The wearer sticks himself into the slits, and so appears as if dressed in boards, so stiff is the stuff, and so little does it accommodate itself to the wearer; on sitting down he slips through it, and it remains standing behind him, a species of portable house.

The Yezidis are found here in considerable numbers: in fact, for the traveller who studies

the races of men, in no space of the same extent probably can be found so many, and so totally different, races despite of ages of intercourse, propinquity of habitations, &c., as from Scanderoon to the Euphrates. He will find in the mountains of the Amanus, (of seven or eight of which we know not even the names,) wild tribes, unknown to the Frank, and unknown to us ; he will find the ancient worship of Astarte at Killis, the ancient Ciliga, and south to the banks of the Kara river. He will find settled Koords, whose language has still a strong mixture of Armenian. The tradition is, that they are Armenians, who early became converts to Mahometanism, and their type of face seems to indicate the same. Nomad Koords, Turkomans, Euruques, Gypsies, Yezidis, Moslems, Arabs, and every denomination of Christians, even now thank the watchfulness of Providence—as a small leaven of those who, taught by Anglican missionaries, worship the God of revelation, the one true God, in purity and truth.

An hour further brought our party to Ceyzee, a large Mussulman village, situated in a sheltered spot, deeply embedded in olive groves.

The sheik met me, and conducted me to his guest-room, an ancient apartment, which he had repaired. The stone still remained over the door, with two palm branches and the episcopal cross on it; beneath he had carved “La illa,” &c., “There is no God but God, and Mahomet is the prophet of God,” as he said, to secure himself against danger from a stone, perhaps placed there by idolaters—he was too civil to say Christians. The elders flocked in to hear the news, and after dinner I was invited to attend at a marriage: it was an old man to a young girl. His sons sat round. They, methought, would have been better companions for the hidden pearl.

As I returned home I left the crowd who accompanied me, to visit an old ruin in the neighbourhood by the soft moonlight. As I sat looking down on the sleeping village, wrapped in silence save the occasional howl of an impatient dog, or the low of a cow or sheep, a veiled figure approached me, and crouched down in the shade of the stone I sat on. “Oh Frank,” said she, “give me life; this month past I have known that you would come. I knew you as you rode up the village. Give me a paper to kill

her; she was the first wife of the man whose tomtoms of joy yet sounded in my ear, whose sweetmeats I had shared." "But, my good lady," said I, "I am a Christian, and have no faith in charms or spells. God trusts not us mortals with such powers." "You a Christian!" said she, "you, who swagger, order Turks to do this and that, whose stirrup the sheik held?" "Yes, a Christian; and as such above all Turks; though lower, worse than all Christians." She pressed me most strongly, owning she would kill her husband sooner than see him rest on that hated bosom. She knelt, she caressed me, impeding my progress; at last, provoked beyond measure at my denial, she tried abuse, and opened upon me a volley whose variety showed a vast extent of inventive speech. As I neared my house she dashed at me, and by the extent of the pain she caused in the back part of my head must have procured the hair she had so much pressed for. In pity I could only hope that it did not cause her husband so much pain as it caused me; nor could I wonder that he had sought refuge in a softer bosom and a milder tongue.

Friday. Off early, leaving the baggage to follow. Ascended the hill on the slope of which Ceyzee stands. On reaching the top, another range stretched before me, separated by a narrow valley. In the valley lay a small spot of ploughed land ; but for the rest it seemed as if at last I had reached the end of the earth ; so barren, sterile, rocky, solid, was that iron range. Amidst the rocks a few sheep wandered, not staying, but passing on, as if hopeless of pasture in such a waste. Far up, but coyly showing, rose the lofty range of the Amanus. From north to south on the ridge near, ran ruins, broken and desolate, shapeless masses, hardly distinguishable from the rocks among which they stood.

We descended, crossed the patch, and ascended the opposite side ; the road, now all untrodden, was once pressed by pilgrim feet. Thousands had trodden this road barefooted, lowly-hearted : niches stood in the rock where lichen grew, of old the shrine of saint or tended light ; weeds and grass hid up each rent, as if soft Nature strove to bind the wounds of Father Time. From the top the view was very fine.

To the N.W. lay the same barren inhospitable waste, as was all around, thickly dotted with ruins. To the north a noble plain ran to the foot of the Taums. To the south, lay the plain of Alak. Here first Zenobia's splendour waned before the Roman power; here her proud heart first learnt the great, grand lesson of a sovereign's life, that all is not for them. But the present absorbed the past, and I visited the northern part of the vast monastery near, the Deir St. Simon. There is little doubt that this is the convent of St. Simon Stylites, the one south in the Benecclessié being pretty generally acknowledged as that of St. Simon, Junior; who, if I remember right maintained his position for sixty-eight years; thus surpassing the original Simon, who—

“ Only for thrice ten years,
Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs, however,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and colds,
On a tall pillar, maintained his post.”

Tradition, however, says he was born in 392, at Sison in Syria. He first mounted a pillar six cubits high, and subsequently one of forty, and that on the two he passed forty-seven

years. Can such a tale be true? He lived till the tolerable age of sixty-nine: so pillar-life is, perhaps, not so unhealthy after all. It is related by a pilgrim, who visited his shrine, that he counted him make one thousand two hundred and forty genuflections, and then ceased counting them. If temporal penance avails, well might he exclaim—

“ O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be saved?
Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?”

Oh, happy man, to believe that a sin, a great sin,—thus uselessly spending your life—can expiate your other sins! Happy creed! How many thousands would you find ready to impillar themselves, could they believe in the expiation it would produce!—

“ Pain, heaped ten thousandfold, to this were still
Less burden by ten thousandfold to bear,
Than are those lead-like tons of sin that crush
Our spirits flat.”*

But for us a better light is shown; and, in leading a life of usefulness, we better earn a

* The Poem of St. Simon Stylites, by Tenyson, exhibits many beautiful portions; and it was with great pleasure I read it on the spot that had echoed to the frenzied call of this chief of madmen, when battering the gates of heaven with storms of prayers, he cried, “Have mercy Lord, and take away my sin.”

crown, than even by forty-eight years of intolerable suffering, self-inflicted. It thus delighted me as I read to identify the scene; to trace his course. But as I lived

“ In the white convent down the valley there,”

there it stands, scarce older-looking now than when St. Simon lived there :

“ For many weeks, about my loins I wore
The rope that baled the bucket from the well.

There was the actual well, its sides cut with cords of the buckets. Search for the rope; it may still be there. Oh, of course not; probably he forgot to return it.

“ I lived up there, on yonder mountain side.”

And thus the poem led me on, each scene relived in the fancy; the pious bishop taking the suicide off the pillar, carefully depositing the body in the tomb. Then he who, living, so hated his own body, the temple God had given to his spirit, that he made it a scarecrow for gaping wonderers, when dead, had a funeral of more than princely pomp,* a tomb of more

* His body was attended to Antioch, where it was interred by 6000 soldiers and an innumerable crowd.

than saintly splendour. Perhaps the adulation he gained, the homage paid him, was his reward. For the weak crowd, let us hope that, even in their superstition,

“ The great Lord of Good
Led them to the light.”

My first inspection led me to the northern portion of the building, the south front of which is handsome, well ornamented, and still, except the roof, in nearly perfect repair. This is the church. It is built within, in the form of a Greek cross, adorned with pillars and other ornamental work. Beneath an octagon dome is the base of the pillar, a huge square block of about nine feet on either side, by five high : a rude step runs round it. In the centre of the upper surface is a round hole for the holding of the first round of the shaft. There were many blocks of stone around, but no ruins of the shaft; perhaps it had all been carried off by the pilgrims, who once thronged to the spot; for the convent enjoyed great celebrity in the fifth and sixth centuries, as well on account of the fame of the building as the vastness of the pile that rose to do him honour. With

regard to the base of the pillar, it did not strike me to be cut from the solid rock, but to be merely a pedestal placed on the rock without any foundation. If the convent was built during his occupation of the pillar, it must have added vastly to his comfort.

The church is built north and south, the façade facing the south. The east side of the cross contained the choir and three altars, each in a semicircular niche. A small altar, also, stood in the semicircle of each side of the octagon dome, which is high and handsome. To the east and west of the enormous church (it must be full two hundred feet long) are small chapels, cloisters, and buildings too numerous to particularise. In a court outside the church wall is a large block of rock squared, and steps cut in the sides. Can it have been for a young aspirant, or was it the one to which the poor maniac was chained before he ascended the pillar? The whole hill-top, full a quarter of a mile in length, was inclosed by a wall, and the space is covered with ruins. On the south, some distance from the church-front, is a lofty octagon building of

two stories, with a large vaulted chamber on the ground-floor. The vault is supported on handsome pillars, well carved, built in the wall. This building is occupied by a Koord family. The males were absent, but I was welcomed by the wife and one of the loveliest girls I ever saw. She might have personified the lovely flower

“ Born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

The large gazing eye, heavy in its dark beauty till roused to cast glances that scorch the heart of him who has not survived the power of such influences. She would have charmed St. Simon's pillar; and really, I fear, had she lived in those days, have divided the devotion of his pilgrims.

At once the servants were ordered to halt. My humble furniture appeared splendour in their eyes; and so, now gazing on the convent, dreaming of the past; now wrapt in admiration of the fair girl who sported round, the day flew over. My ill-healed wound had taken this occasion to break out,—riding was impossible. So without many pangs, the horses

were sent off to the sheik to secure them from being stolen, and I took up half the building occupied by the family. Sweetmeats and kind words completed the favour their own hospitality had led them to show; and I was tended rather as a brother than an unknown stranger from a far land of a hostile faith.

Hindee was also relieved from the task of water-carrying, which, though she did it in the most graceful dainty way, she murmured at doing. This gained me her good graces.* Old Mahmoud, my groom, turned pastoral; appropriated a pipe he found, and, save his oriental costume, reminded me excessively of Don Quixote's sheep-keeping plan put into effect. Another servant collected the wood, and my baggage-horse staggered beneath a load such as had often caused the sigh of Hindee. The females thus relieved from the field labour generally imposed on them, had no cares but those of the household. At first my meals were eaten alone, and they were shy of ap-

* There is no well on the hill. The water has to be brought from below,—a tedious walk.

proaching ; but after a day or so, finding me a poor, quiet cripple, who groaned or read when they were away, and did my best to please when they were by, they nursed me, sang to me, made my nargilleh, coffee and sherbet, and at last we all eat out of the same basket, and lived liked one family.

An old Turk had joined me at a village a little beyond Aleppo, and begged me to take him to Antioch. He was a Durweesh, but had broken down on the road to his native place. His quiet demeanour and kind gentleness had completely won me ; so he became established as a companion. The Arabic copy of Robinson Crusoe was in my *hourse*, (saddle-bags) and this was a never-failing source of delight. The old man read and re-read it to them ; their remarks, their wonder, their admiration, were charming. But there was one inconceivable thing, the sea. The mother and Hindee's idea of water was circumscribed to a well and a river ; nor could they imagine why, if he was tired of his island, he did not take off his trousers, (shoes and stockings they never wore,) and walk to the first village. However, they were deeply interested

in the story, and dear Hindee and myself arranged a plan for riding off and searching out just such another island. Then I taught them to sew, and actually assisted them in patching their slender wardrobes. Abdallah dashed all manner of things into saucepans, and fabricated strange sweets; so we were as happy as the day. It is useless thus conjuring up the past, when its pleasures and joys can never be renewed! The father returns, and a great fierce-looking brother, but they were softened. Hindee clung to the father's neck till he melted from a muleteer into a man, and welcomed the Giaour as a friend, even offering to give me his daughter for my wife, for one thousand piastres; less than 10%.

The servants had been told to meet me at a ruin some distance from the convent, so I quitted my friends without saying farewell, leaving a present with each, and putting an ornament on Hindee's head, who was fast asleep. No one saw me, so I robbed those lips of one of the rosy kisses which nestled there; and full of resolution walked down the hill. Below the convent stands a town, or rather the size of the buildings

would indicate it as such, though their number was small. One was a large convent—the convent I have described before as where St. Simon lived before he ascended the pillar; the other being a later construction, either during his life on the pillar, or perhaps after his release from his self-delusion. This convent is also extensive. Two of the other buildings seem churches; the rest may have been places of accommodation for the thousands who once flocked to this now untrodden and forsaken sanctuary. They are built in the same style as the ruins of Kafir el Barah, one stone thick, without cement.

The convent, except the roof, is perfect; a causeway joins it to a vaulted room called El Amaree. The back and portions of the sides of this, as also the floor, are the solid rock, and the whole is surrounded by sarcophagi. Many of these have been walled up, but sacrilegious hands have forced them open. In the rocks around are numerous other tombs. The whole of this town is called, as well as the convent, Deir Simon, the upper part being distinguished from the rest as the Kalaat, or castle. I forgot

to say that some of the buildings had open colonnades of pillars, and some were otherwise ornamented.

Going S.W., in half an hour I reached another ruined town, called Katoura. It contained nothing to render it unlike the others. Thence we passed up a rough roadless wady, called Namous el Melek. It was full of tombs excavated in the rocks: on either side, above, many figures were carved, and there were some Greek inscriptions. I much regret having hurried through it, but it poured with rain, and fever had attacked two of the servants, so we hurried on to a shelter. I fancied also I saw under a Greek inscription one in Arabic; above was a figure of a man rising on a couch, with drapery over him.

On the hills around were several other tombs. My course was now north-westerly, skirting round the north-east base of Djebel Simon; the country the same dreary waste. In an hour and a half passed to the north and west of a ruined town, Gagete. From the remains of pillars and cloisters, it seemed better built than the others; the country totally uninhabited,

save by a few shepherds, who fled at my approach. The country as we rode north changed to rolling hills, covered with grass. Passed the village of Sallue, whose inhabitants, a few wretched Mussulman Fellahs, were Trog-lodytes. There were a few Koordish tents pitched within the roofless ruins of former houses, so that a wall formed the sides of the edifice and their tent tops the roof. They were smoking at every pore, a large fire within, endeavouring, seemingly, to dry the cloth, wet with the torrents that fell. Here there was a fine church and burial-ground.

The fever victims seemed to suffer so much, that I pulled up in a cave; which we shared with a family of Turks, a parchment-faced mother and four sons, with their wives and children; also another guest. Our party so overcrowded the place that when the horses were admitted, I was the only person who had room; the spot my carpet occupied being shared by nothing but insects, who have no sycophantish respect for persons. The place was called Kaa, and consisted of a space where the rock was hollowed out and a wall built up in front. The

wall and rock being ill joined, the rain poured on us fast ; I had, however, no choice, for the Koord tents around offered even less accommodation. The poor people gave us a hearty welcome, and offered all they had. The Mus-sulmans here consisted of fifteen souls ; they cultivated the district about, ploughing the land ; why they remained in such a place I could not imagine. Sygee * was their village. Why had they left it ? for no place here has more hands than are needed, and here what little they had was plundered from them by the Koords, with whom they were at feud, and who shortly before, if they told the truth, had cleared their wretched cave of all it contained.

While talking, in stalked a most lordly-looking fellow, well dressed, splendidly armed. He was the beau ideal of an Oriental warrior : middle aged, without a touch of time. Pointing at me as he entered with his stick, he said, “ Does he understand Turkish ? ” I said, “ He does.” He then said, “ It is my right that you should lodge with me. Why did you not ? ”

* Some four hours distant.

“Your tents are damp; my servants have the fever: I thought it better not.” We soon got over his first incivility, and he sat while we smoked, drank coffee, and he begged the news. From what he told me, I gained that he was chief of a party of the wild Cocher Koords, Mr. Layard and myself heard so much of in Koordistan; that, ascending to the highlands in the summer, and descending to the plains in the winter, they had taken four years to journey from the Euphrates to reach their present encampment; that they were forced to this step by a feud they had with a more numerous body of their tribe. He praised the present pastures, abused the people around as thieves, but seemed to turn them pretty well to his own use. Even while sitting he ordered the fellows out on some business of his, though they loudly pleaded pressing occupations of their own.

After he was gone, all commenced abusing him and his people. I must own it was a new thing to see Mussulmans oppressed, and I lectured them largely. “Now, you feel what you make the Christians of this land feel hourly, daily, life-long—what you make your own blood,

feel, for you; and they had probably the same fathers, though yours denied their God, and changed their religion, fearful of persecution, or worse." They seemed, however, so fully impressed with the idea that for them to persecute was right, and to be persecuted wrong, that the lesson was lost. A fellow, who I afterwards found was a fugitive from Aleppo, said we also, the English, were under the Sultan, and yearly presented a virgin to him.

The eve, long as it was, drew to a close: it was a sad contrast to St. Simon and beauty. A wet cave, women of wrinkled parchment, servants ill, smoke, wet, misery. Oh, travel, thou art, after all, a dubious pleasure—at least, under such circumstances as these! The Aleppine confessed himself, when the rest were asleep. He said, "What will you do for me?" I said, "If I do anything, I will give you up to justice." He did not ask again.

Saturday. Cold, stiff, cramped and wet, we started as early as there was light; but no ill-humour could be long proof against the lovely spring morning. The earth, grateful for the shower shed by the clouds on her

bosom, sent up her freshest incense. She had clothed herself in gaudy garment, and our road was one carpet of flowers, fresh, and springy, grass, young, crisp, and dewy—the horses left their heads almost behind them in their eagerness to eat it, and so good and sweet it seemed, one half longed to be a Nebuchadnezzar for once.

The dress of the fellahs here is the same as that generally worn: the short Homs jacket, long cotton shirt, and no trousers; these seem considered a superfluity, and are seldom worn except when they ride: then they are indispensable. The dress of the Koords was better, and, as often noticed before, their dyes are of a peculiarly beautiful colour; the men, most of those whom I saw, had silk dresses. The boots made here are excellently made, I should have said worn, for they told me they were made in Antioch, a light boot that almost fits like a moccassin; a long flap comes up and protects the shin, another behind, the sides open; these are tied round with thongs.

We rode down a long valley, the hills on either side being round grassy swells: before us,

to be reached by a gradual descent, lay a broad valley, in which glistened the lake, Al Gherta; while lofty mountains, whose snowy peaks were undistinguishable from the fleecy clouds, closed in the scene. I found and crossed the high road, three hours from Hammam; passing several ruins and some Turkoman encampments. We reached the plain at the serai of Achmet Bey, a Turkoman chief; who has a large serai; this we left on our right, and skirted along the base of the hills forming the southern boundary of the plain. Here first saw the sloping roof, also numerous tels. In an hour arrived at Youngis Shi—a fine house with windows, glass, &c., now a barrack; it was built by a Pasha, and on his death reverted to the Validé Sultana, whose protégé he was; it is used as a cavalry barrack. Some hundreds of geese were there; which being royal property, are sacred, therefore never touched.

Near Youngis Shi are some ruins, those of an aqueduct, of a castle, and some extensive vaults. The small river Anguli passes through it; there are several peasant's houses, besides the barracks, a mill, &c. We still kept along

the bases of the hills ; at one moment I counted seventeen tels at once, and they gave me more the idea that they were artificial than any I had seen before. A swamp prevented our going straight for the iron-bridge, so we had to skirt round two sides of a triangle. Storks by millions ; there were flocks of them from horizon to horizon ; eagles, like privateers, soared outside the band, but numbers would assemble, and the royal bird dared not risk an attack. Some flocks had settled on the plain ; they seem naturally tame, and sauntered out of the way most leisurely. The country continued the same till the Djisser Haddeed, or iron-bridge ; a long low bridge with low pointed arches over the Orontes, here a muddy sluggish stream ; on it is a gate, whose doors are coated with iron. It is said to be called the iron-bridge, because they are coated with iron.

Pulled up at a khan near a Koordish village, within a few hundred yards of the bridge. In vain inquired why it was called the iron bridge ? “ Haik ; ” (thus, so,) was all I found out. After a short halt started again, and deserting the road took to the ploughed fields, as easier for the

horses; the late rain had made it one mass of mud. Made many vain inquiries for the Lake Fortress, or Legend, mentioned in the "Correspondence d'Orient;" none such existed. Still continued skirting along the southern hills. The northern Amanus or Beilan range was very fine, and between us rolled the river—so fat and overgrown it had swamped half the plain; great numbers of cattle were feeding about here and there; tents and villages. From a great distance we saw the walls of Antioch running round the tops of the end of the ridge, at whose base it appeared over the nearer intervening mountains; then evening came on, cool and delightful; we enter pleasant gardens which load with perfume the heavy evening air; the rocks were cut with caves here and there; the road also showed remains of pavement; the Bab Paulos is in sight, and from thence the walls of Antioch, ruined, shattered, run up the hill; their ruins and remains of towers are all that mark their once lofty site.

There is nothing peculiar in the gate; plain, small, and ill-built, and I should doubt its antiquity. Within is an old wall containing a

vault and a paved road, running along, an undoubted but most tiresome relic of the past, over which the horses fall, slip, and stumble uncomfortably. An abrupt hill rose on the left, barren and rocky; on the right lay gardens, sweet, flowering. Nothing proclaimed an approach to a large city; all was silence; and thus we crept into the once proud Queen of the East. Well, truly is the prophecy fulfilled—"She shall no more be called the Lady of Kingdoms." We were in the waste; and then a number of twinkling glow-worms seemed to form an avenue on either side; and I looked:—they were men smoking in silence. Then we were in a street all dark as death; then a tall thing broke the line: it was a minaret, and so I knew I was in the city where our Faith received its name.

CHAPTER X.

A Strange Adventure—Excellent entertainment—Disquisition upon Babies—Early fading of Eastern beauty—An innocent Illusion—Household lecture—Palace of Ibrahim Pasha—Consul's visitors' book—Antioch—The fall of Heraclius—Departure from Antioch—A beautiful prospect described—Ain el Kadmous—A plenitude of waters—Valley of the Beit-el-Maa—Groves of Daphne—Account of them in Gibbon—My fame precedes me—Mythology of Daphne—Village of Sinnini—Djebel Okral—Residence of Dr. Yates—Swadea—Syrian character of the Franks—Improvements of Mr. Barker.

It was so dark that we could distinguish nothing. A good-natured fellow offered to guide us. We arrived at a house, knocked, and the servants rushed in at the door. Servants from within bore off the luggage. I stood alone where my traps had been; then rushed a man at me, warm and affectionate, shorter than I. He tore me down and devoured my bearded face with kisses. "*Mon frère! mon frère!*" he cried:—here was a situation. Hand in hand we walked up stairs to see my sister. We entered a room; my friend rushed at me again, for I had not

spoken : “ And so you are he ? but they told me you were shorter, thinner, slighter. *Mon Dieu*, how like our father ! ” I had never heard that my dear father had visited the East ; so, having recovered my breath, winked my eyes into seeing, I proceeded to explain who I was. It then appeared that my new friend was that evening expecting a brother from Aleppo, lately come from France, whom he had not seen for twenty years. His servant, stationed at the door-entrance to the town, mistook me for him. My new friend would not hear of my leaving, so we arranged that I was to dine, and then depart.

Now this was the fulfilment of a hope—for a well-laid table, silver spoons, tumblers, plates, gave promise of a meal not to be neglected by one who has eaten dough cakes, and onions, tough stringy fowls, and sour milk, without variation for the last month ; and the pleasure of a good meal, wine and cleanliness, was a luxury not to be slighted. The gentleman was a French merchant ; and I retired to bed at the English consular agent’s, Michael Deeb or Michael Wolf, Esquire, with a

thankful remembrance of his kindness and good feeding.

Sunday. On my arrival at the consul's, I found the servants again down with the fever. A bed had been made up for me on the divan. A naoura (water-wheel) groaned almost at my pillow, but, spite of all, I rushed off to the land of dreams, and slept till the morning was far advanced. On awaking, a girl-matron was sitting in the room nursing a truly ugly brat. Few things are uglier than babies. In England they are sufferable, because mostly clean and pulled into a semblance of neatness by the nurse, or mother, who kisses the slobbering lump of fat as if she loved it. But a baby in the East is a baby with every disadvantage. The huge eyes, so fine, so loving, and so lovely when grown, are in infancy rolled emptily about as if stretching their cords, and getting into order for their future work. The dress, exactly what it wears all its life, save smaller; ill put on; dragged here loose; there the arm lost in a mass of sleeve dashing about a cuff all dirt and horror. The face clammy, unwashed, mouth unwiped, eyes uncleaned, cap put on

painfully and pushed here and there; now recklessly cocked on one side; now deep set over the face; now thrown back slatternly. Then, as all children in the East have just what they cry for, its young life is alternated between yells and gifts. An Eastern baby is the worst of babies.

Nurses must be hypocrites when they express such ardent love for the shapeless piece of humanity. A baby is lowering to look at, for it reminds us of our weakness, our frailty, our feeble tenure of existence; without sense, without even the instinct of the young of brutes, it is a humbling lesson to see what we once were; what, if not cut down in our strength, we may become again.

All this passed through my mind as I lay watching this girl nursing her child; she was herself very pretty, but had only the beauty of youth; already pain and the wear of the world had begun to pull the young fresh childish features out of place; the helpmate entered and I found she was the consul's wife. So I shammed sleep to gain a lesson of private life behind the scenes in the East. The wife—forgive

me—had before been attentively looking at me. I had felt my moustache wanted putting to rights to show me to advantage, but dared not do it for fear of destroying the delusion, and it was pleasant to lie there gazed at by large, lustrous, ever-widening eyes, like those of a gazing deer. In the East, female society is so little enjoyed, and when it is, is so fenced by custom, that an opportunity of this sort was not to be destroyed.

When the husband entered, she turned away—she was a woman, so this was natural, and began patting the child. Then commenced a long discourse on culinary matters, and an artful plan whereby I was to be pleased; rakkee was pronounced necessary for breakfast, as all English loved it.

“He speaks Arabic,” the husband said; “how is that? His servants say he speaks everything, rides like a devil, has no religion, and talks to an invisible spirit* when there is nobody else to speak to.” The wife at this, grew anxious, curious to know more of such a singular being,

* Meaning I held conversations, and sported poetry,—a habit that hangs on me. While I rode, I had often been asked, when caught at it, “Ask your spirit so and so for me; ask him this. Will he answer me, if I ask him?”

and said, "How late he sleeps." "Well, they say he never sleeps, and no one ever enters his room and finds him asleep. At night he talks to the stars, yet is up before the sun, and yelling like a fiend to be off." He then gave her, wicked man, a long and severe lecture on not speaking to me, not listening to, not looking at me. Oh, naughty jealous Wolf. She left in a huff; he hemmed; I jumped up and greeted him just as if I did not hate him. He would fain have showed me over the sights; but, in Antioch, he would ill deserve the name or honour of Christian who made not the Sabbath a day of rest: here, in the very air where the Apostle had bid his brethren, with purpose of heart, to "cleave unto the Lord."

On the following day, as early as light, I set off to view all that was to be seen—but now the Queen of the East sits in darkness, and little save her ancient renown is left. On Sunday, most of the influential Christians had paid me visits; they complained, even more than they do elsewhere, of their troubles, their persecutions, and miseries. I read to them, or rather they read at my suggestion, the words

of Timothy, "Persecutions and afflictions that came unto me at Antioch, but out of them all the Lord delivered me." The rest of the holy day was passed in reading and resting for a fresh start. Mrs. Consul occasionally came in, and we had snatches of conversation. On my complaining of the naoura, she said, "If it were to stop, we could not sleep ; we should awake and be lost."

The consul from Swadea called on me ; he was on his way to Aleppo, relative to an aggression of the authorities there. Starting early, we rode to the western side of the town ; here are small remnants of the wall. I searched in vain for it, and the church of St. Paul. Without the ditch, which is still clearly distinguishable, is a palace, built by Ibrahim Pasha, a huge place full of windows, with fine large rooms. Here were his head-quarters, and here his son generally resided. Just above these, are barracks, capable of holding 10,000 men. All this is fast falling to ruins, though a nominal expense would keep it in repair. Before the door an open drain lays bare a fine perfect piece of tessellated pavement. From thence I strolled

through the town; the bazaars are small, and there is little doing, its famous silk being chiefly exported and worked elsewhere.

And this once vast mart is not even now a high road to trade: it is much out of the way; neither of the roads to Aleppo, from Latakia or Scanderoon, passing near it. Much fanaticism still lingers, and it is burthened with twenty-four Ulemas, or great Turks, each of whom intrigues, governs, and does pretty much as he likes; each must also eat a portion of money. The few Franks complained much of the insults they endured, and received my lessons of personal chastisement on the moment for any affront, with a promise to follow my example.

It was no small pleasure, on looking over the consul's visitors' book, to see the names of many known to me personally, others only by their fame; and it seemed a pleasure to be where they had been, and thus to see evidence of their presence.—In bold and legible characters, El Principe Puckler Muskau, Lord Eastnor, Kerr, Layard, Badger, and others, whose names are known in every house in England.

Antioch, the modern Antarkee, cannot occupy a tenth of the space enclosed by the walls, though, from the precipitous nature of the ground, we may doubt whether the whole was ever covered with buildings; and the rocks on the hill side seem left as nature designed them, not smoothed or cut for buildings to stand on. The houses are mean, and badly, slightly, built. This, they say, arises from their fear of earthquakes, and the walls, if heavy, crushing them. The history of Antioch is too well known to need repetition here.

It was within this town that Heraclius assembled his nobles and clergy, and bewailed the fate of Syria, deserted by its God for the sins of rulers and people. Ascending a hill in the neighbourhood, he cast one last fond look on his beloved Antioch, and on the fruitful valley stretching away with its flourishing town and glittering turrets: then, with expressions of regret and conviction that he should no more behold this loved scene, he made his way to the shore, and sailed to Constantinople. Moslem traditions ascribe his retiring to a desire not to wage war with the Islam, to whose faith

he had been miraculously converted. The conversion is attributed to a cup which Omar sent him, which cured a headache when all other remedies had failed. On this cup was inscribed a verse of the Koran. History records, perhaps with greater truth, a conversation between him and a Moslem captive as to the dignity and person of his sovereign. "What sort of a palace has your Caliph?" said the purple-clad monarch of the Eastern world. Of mud. "Who are his attendants?"—"Beggars and poor people."—"What tapestry does he sit on?"—"Justice and uprightness."—"And what is his throne?"—"Abstinence and wisdom." "His treasure?"—"Trust in God."—"And who are his guards?"—"The bravest of the Unitarians."

Would it not have been well had Heraclius heard, while he wept upon the hill the loss of his fair patrimony, the words afterwards addressed to an Islam king, as he, too, wept over dominions he could no longer retain: "Oh, prince, why dost thou weep like a woman for what thou couldst not defend like a man?" In six years all Syria fell: just seven hundred after

Pompey had despoiled the last of the Macedonian kings, and the whole region submitted to the Arabian Caliphs. To those who read it as an abstract history, it must appear incredible that 30,000 Arabs, armed only with their boundless enthusiasm, should have reft such provinces from the grasp of Rome—should have scattered armies of hundreds of thousands, and without engines have taken cities that could send forth their 80,000 warriors: but he who has seen the land, may trace in its unvarying treachery and its blind obedience to fancied fatality, a cause which operated more potently than arms or enemies: the implicitly believed doctrine of the crime of resistance, the servile obedience to lordly command—all made roads over which the Moslems dashed, and at a future day the same paths will remain, and present a way to any who wishes to advance along them.

Violent doses of quinine had driven the fever from us all, so at daylight we were on our way, leaving Antioch by the Bab Latakia. We passed some distance over a paved road like the other, by the Bab Paulos, a painful piece of antiquity, but were well repaid by the beauty of the

farther route—for the road, a pleasant lane, led us through shady and pleasant paths, amidst honey-suckle, myrtle, rhododendron and hawthorn, each laden with scent and covered with blossoms : when these failed and the view opened, we obtained glimpses of one of the fairest valleys on the earth. On the north lay the lofty range of Bylan, its base basking in the sun, its varied and broken summits cooling in the sky. The Orontes, decently confined within its banks, wound and turned, as if loth to leave its own land,—as if willing to abide here,—as if seeking by shifts and twists to defer its mingling with the ocean.

On the south, above us, rock, crag, and precipice rose in every fantastic form. Behind, the mountain-encircled walls of Antioch were yet visible ; around us the low hills that formed the undulating plain of the valley were rich with groves and plantations, all budding forth to welcome with gladness the coming spring, all flowery with bloom, and with beauty. Cottages nestling in groves, grassy banks shaded by trees, pretty nooks, sequestered vales, deep dells, miniature valleys, pleasant spots, with cool

shades, rustling waters, broad strong trees, and simple wild flowers,—all came crowding to the wondrous scene: perhaps the whole lost some of its beauty by the perfection of the detail; the detail much by the magnificence of the whole.

We rode thus through the Ain el Kadmous—a pretty village scattered amidst gardens with a spring, shaded by a magnificent sycamore, and then up to a small plain, to the Ansayrii village of Karia: beyond this, a short distance, is the Fuar; it commands a noble view situated on a plain half way up the hill. The valley and river flow a mile or two off beneath; above it rise loftier heights. This by the late Mr. Barker was considered the emplacement of the palaces of Daphne. My search for ruins was unsuccessful; the spring rises through a frame of stone some two feet square, and is chiefly expended in irrigating the plantations below. I saw another of these conduits, but it is dry. The water that flows here is brought by this conduit from the Djebel Tohadeen, or that portion of it called the Beit el Moiaa (Maa). Ten minutes' ride brought me to the Beit el

Moiaa (Maa), situated up a valley ; where lofty verdure-clad precipices closed in the space, where rocks, and trees, and shade, and all Nature's beauties were strewn with lavish profusion.

From the valley head flow a thousand streams, here in dashing, foaming, resistless, body ; there in silvery threads : here in depth confined by narrow banks ; there on broad shallows covering the hill side. The scene was one of exceeding beauty ; water in the channels, water on the paths, fresh gushing cooling water everywhere : here a cascade, caught by the sun-beams, glittered with a thousand lustres ; there, like silver set in green enamel, it foamed a stream : here flowers, creepers, and plants, toyed with the waters gushing and jumping from their beds with playful motions. Nature rejoiced in the streams, and repaid their kindness by clothing their banks with lustiest verdure. All was perfect ; soft mossy banks, myrtles' shade, trees, rocks and precipices, creepers softening, caverns darkening, crags frowning. Much of the direction of the streams is artificial, but it is a Turkish artifice ; leaving Nature to do pretty nearly what she likes ; and capricious as her

sex, she throws the water sportingly about in a thousand channels.

Above is a stream running parallel to the mountain: this carries off a great deal, but enough overflows to form the other streams. This is supplied from the fountains which gush out of the rock. On one side is the conduit that leads to the Fuar, an artificial work. It passes through the centre of a hill which forms the side of the valley of the Beit el Maa, and intervenes between it and the Fuar. The two principal sources gush from a projecting rock, one in its eastern, the other in its western face. The streams are, either of them, the thickness of a man's body, and gush up with great force. The rocks near also drip with water: the peasants told me that the stream continues the same winter and summer. The rock is much cracked above; and may be in height three hundred feet. After a long search for ruins, a search unrewarded with any success, I chose the prettiest nook, spread my carpet, and indulged in a nargilleh, coffee, wild celery, meat, fruits, &c. Thus, appetite appeased, the scene revelled over, I opened Gibbon, and, on the

spot, read his glorious lines on Daphne and its groves.

The groves were probably planted shortly after the founding of the city of Antioch by Seleucus. Antiochus the Fourth, that wicked prince to whom the prophecy of Daniel is said to refer, a vile person, solemnised games here with all splendour. Finding that Paulus Æmilius, after having defeated Perseus and conquered Macedonia, had solemnised games in the city of Amphipolis, situated on the river Strymon, he resolved to do the same at Daphne. The games were celebrated with incredible pomp, cost immense sums, and lasted several days. He appears to have committed so many follies that he became the laughing-stock of the assembled crowds; and many were so disgusted that they withdrew and refused to attend at other feasts to which he invited them. One result, however, sprung from this scene of debauchery and madness. Judas had time to rally his forces in Judea, and the Jews to breathe from their bitter persecutions. The lavish expense had exhausted the tyrant's treasure, and, the games concluded, he

awoke to find, in the words of the prophet, “risings against him in the East and in the North.” Then turn to the glowing page of the immortal Gibbon. He goes on to say, “The temple and the village were deeply bosomed in a thick grove of laurels and cypresses, which reached as far as a circumference of ten miles, and formed in the most sultry summers a cool and impenetrable shade; a thousand streams of the purest waters issuing from every hill preserved the verdure of the earth and the temperature of the air. The senses were gratified by harmonious sounds, and aromatic odours, and the peaceful grove was consecrated to health, and joy—to luxury and love.

“Vain was the great Emperor’s attempt to restore its heathen fame. The word had echoed through the land—had penetrated its secret recesses—its high places—and its groves. No power of man—no force of persecution—could restore the broken Apollo or chaste Daphne to those haunts. A goose was the only oblation he could find. The blood of his Christian people, the incense he offered on the shrine of his God.”

I tried my fortune at the Castalian stream; but the guardian spirit loved me not and sent back the leaf blank as my fortunes. The Jerusalem Itinerary seems to indicate this spot; nor would it be found not to fulfil the description of Strabo, and ten miles of circumference would take in the Fuer, the Beit el Maa, and the Duer, to which we will proceed as soon as Gibbon is packed in the saddle-bag.

The people had flocked round me, and a handsome youth had entertained me with his pipe. The fame of the great Ansayrii Prince has extended here. Of course I pretended to know nothing of him; and so refreshed by the waters, delighted by the scene, I mounted. As we turned down a steep path, the descending waters accompanied us, recklessly dashing on rocks and stones—passionately scattering its spray—tearing harmless bushes from their roots—rushing headlong to the valley. The road was steep, and we were forced to tread it with cautious steps; but then overhead closed a forest of laurels and laurestinus, bay, fig, sycamore and vine, plane trees, and lustrous-flowered creepers, scented myrtle, and budding

pomegranate shading these groves of love—these lover-haunted shades. Traditionary groves, you are lovely, and it was a fond and pretty fiction that transferred you from the banks of the Peneus, cold and bare, to the verdant glades of the Orontes! Haply, however, the loveless maid, amidst these softer scenes, might not have spurned the affection so warmly pleaded; and Daphne laurels might have bound the brow of the God of Light.

It is needless to repeat the words of praise my note-book held on this day's route. In an hour I reached the Duer, another spring, and then descending, left "as a past" those scenes I had so enjoyed "in the present." Women were washing in all the streams; but true daughters of Daphne, they dashed off on my approach, leaving only suds behind them. The old generally stood their ground, refusing, however, to answer all our questions, though styled ladies and nobles.

Late in the afternoon I reached the Orontes, which horses and all crossed in a ferry-boat. I doubted the powers of the boat, though the boatman declared he had never been capsized in

his life. We arrived in safety, and put up at a cottage for the night, one of a few houses which, with the ferry, were called Towouklee. There were there the remains of a ruined bridge. The hot weather had brought to life a new birth of animals that rendered my sleep but a farce, so we started a little after midnight, and after an hour's march halted and slept much more soundly on some dry sand. The sun awoke me with its earliest rays, when we rose and proceeded on our way. After passing through some mulberry groves, the road ran over a barren brown heath. The contrast from yesterday was surprising, and but that a glance behind assured one of its reality, the groves of yesterday seemed fictions of the brain. The ground now was broken by hills, amidst which the Orontes wound, as if, finding itself too long for the valley, it had to turn to get its length into the space.

From the village of Sinnini, where there is another ferry, I took a guide and visited the Beniclessié and the Pillar of St. Simon Junior. Abler pens have described the scene. The Convent of St. Simon is similar to the one at

Djebel El Simon ; but for me, there was no Hindee here. After three days agreeably spent amongst a series of ruins and in exploring the district, I descended through the village of Megairoon to the valley of the Orontes. The opposite bank still mocked me with its beauty, while the northern side was the same brown barren waste. On reaching a ridge, a change like magic came over the scene. Another Daphne, an earthly Paradise, lay before me. The valley to the sea was in our view, carefully planted, tended, and cared for—its surface broken by graceful hills and pretty dells—the closing mountains now grand and magnificent : on the south, Djebel Okral towered up half its height amidst the heavens—a worthy finish to the noble range. Beyond lay the sea, deep blue, to the cliffs, marking the basis of the mountain, with a clear well-defined line. On its quiet waters sailed two English vessels as they worked into the roads like swans, sweeping gracefully on their own element. Calm as was that sea, however, a poor dismal brig showed it could behave occasionally as badly as the ugliest looking water in the world.

The gardens and cultivation here excelled all I have ever seen in the Sultan's dominions. Each plantation was surrounded by a ditch and fence, well kept; within, also, more care seemed bestowed; the whole was one vast mass of verdure. There is a Turkish Aga, the first of his nation ever so comfortably lodged, whose house is charmingly placed, and seemed, from a mere passing inspection, a large commodious bungalow. But the reformed man, in a position where there is a view lovely enough to make a Prometheus thankful, has surrounded his house with a lofty wall. One only window commands a view, and here the brute himself probably sits, prohibiting, as a sin, his poor wife to approach it. A mile further down is the dwelling of Doctor Yates. He was absent, but his *homme d'affaires* allowed me to view the house. When finished it will be splendid; the rooms are lofty, large, and airy, and commanding a truly enchanting view. The back pleased me most; on stepping out of the door and turning to look, you saw just such a cottage ornée, save its size, as one loves, in midsummer, in the Isle of Wight; trellises

filled with roses, which, repaying the tending they received by bunches of flowers, covered the wall.

A half hour more brought me to Swadea, where I received every hospitality from the kind Barkers. It was delightful to find oneself amidst English ; more pleasant still amidst English ladies ; and, to complete the charm, fresh, rosy, dear, English children, running about and talking English as a household tongue. For the pleasant hours I passed there, receive my most cordial thanks, kind hosts !

To those who run through the Syrian provinces with a dragoman, whose only medium of communication is an interpreter, all appears glitter, romance and beauty : even the consul sees it with its dress clothes on. But the wanderer, like myself, who is familiar with all,—far different is his impression—mean, sneaking, lying, cringing, impertinent, dishonourable,—few, alas, that he sees would he wish to see again. Then again, the tourist does not understand the customs. An insult is put upon him ; he does not see it. He asks the dragoman, “ What do they say ? ” “ Oh,

nothing, Sir, they hope you have enjoyed your journey." Their utter want of truthfulness—the absence of any feeling of honour—it is sad to live among a people so debased. This refers to the Christians universally, to the Turks generally; though among them there are many honourable exceptions. And let me also, with all truthfulness except, generally, the Ansayrii, of whose good faith I can speak most highly.

It is a common boast in Syria among the higher classes, merchants, &c., "The Franks are fools; we can do with them as we like." But how? The word of the one is binding as a bond. The Arab has no such prejudices to overcome. It would be tedious to relate the many instances of this that have come under my notice; but they at last have taught me to reverse the rule of considering all men honest till you find them rogues, and I have seldom, alas! to change my opinion. The women, of course, one has no such contact with; and, save from their utter ignorance and fanatic bigotry, they are kind. After months of such society it was a delight to find oneself in a pretty

English house, imbedded in a treasure of a garden, with honest, frank, simple-hearted people.

The late Mr. Barker, at great pains and cost, collected every species of fruit tree, and, in his garden, the mango, the loquat, and the strawberry flourish side by side; oranges, too, of every description. In the mountains to the north, at the Armenian village of Belias, he built a summer-house; and, at that elevation, the potato and strawberry, with other northern fruits, thrive well. To him is also owing the excellence of the silk at present produced in the district. New seed of a finer, better sort was introduced, a finer mulberry produced, and the Turks have freely shared without expense all he imported. The increase of revenue to the Government has been enormous.

CHAPTER XI.

Cheating in the Conscription—Cross the Orontes—Arrival at Djebel Okral—Halt for the night at Casseb—Christian Converts—Zeal of the Missionaries—Extensive Pine Forests—Reported killed—A Tribute to a Friend—Endeavour to establish a School—My Possessions in the East—Legend of the Unicorn.

THE task of drawing the lots for the conscription had been entrusted to the superintendence of the council at Antioch. On the appointed day, all who had been inscribed as of the age required, repaired there. The mosque admits them, and the mosque is closed. Now the men collected to be drawn from Swadea were all either employed in the gardens of Mr. Barker, or in those of the Turks, who superintend the drawing, and the scene within is described as follows.

Mahmoud Ibn Hassan.—The said Mahmoud advances; he is employed in the garden of an Aga, or an Effendi, who cries out, “You, what are

you here for?—your father is dying, go home.” Up comes the next. His master swears by the Prophet, by his honour, this man is always ill, and it would be a robbery of the Sultan to send him, and so on, till Mr. Barker’s men only remained. Six of them were elected to the honour of serving the Padishah. One more instance, and after another hour at Swadea; to the road again.

With all the fertility of the soil—with all the spaces just proper for it—no vegetables are produced, and those who desire such luxuries must send to Antioch for them, a distance of five hours. Why is this? If vegetables are produced, the labourer finds by a careful calculation the increased tax, (public of government, private of his landlord,) would cost him more than if they are not.

I visited Kapse and the ancient port; they are already known to the reader. So returning to Swadea along the mountains, let us start for Latakia. Passing the flat cultivated land, we crossed the Orontes by a ferry, and skirted round the foot of the mountains as they ran towards the sea. The river still continues its windings, often

turning back almost on itself, running through a dark red soil. There is a *mina* or port about two miles above the entrance, with a few huts. Nothing, however, but the smaller class of native vessels can cross the bar. The mountains here take a bend to the south, leaving a plain between their basis and the sea some two miles broad. This is but partially cultivated.

Passed a spring in the rock, from whence ran the remains of an aqueduct. Arrived at the base of the Djebel Okral, where it runs east and west into the sea, and forms the Rass el Hhanseer, or Point Pig's Head, the road leaves the valley and ascends at once into the mountains through a wild and beautiful gorge. Here are several tombs cut in the rock. The path was overgrown with bushes, and the horses brushed aromatic air from the myrtle as they forced their way through. This seems all over the Ansayrii mountains the principal plant, and more plentiful than broom in England.

The scenery grew wilder and wilder as we advanced into the heart of the mountains, deep glens, forests of pines utterly neglected. We passed one large Turkish village; and at

six hours from Swadea, reached Casseb, our halt for the night. Casseb is a large village of Armenian Christians, prettily situated in as wild and secluded a spot as men would well have chosen to dwell in; they are governed by their own sheik, but complained a little of aggressions from their Mussulman neighbours: the village must contain 150 houses.

My host, who was not the sheik, but a person who had suffered much for his faith, and was now under the protection of our consul at Swadea, kept a house for strangers. To this I was kindly welcomed, and though something like Sancho Panza's host, offering everything, and having nothing, still he was a good, kind man, and I freely forgive him the dry bread which was all we found. In the evening several people came to see me. It appeared that some time since, one of the American missionaries, passing through, had remained a day or so beneath this roof. Well had he improved the time, and, on leaving, had distributed several bibles among those whom he thought it might profit. The good seed had thriven, and now there were eight families who had renounced their old

faith, and sincerely embraced the Bible as their guide; sincerely, I say, for no temporal interest could have influenced them, and they had at once been persecuted by their unconverted neighbours; they also said several others were becoming shaken in their faith, and searched the Scriptures eagerly for truth.

They spoke long and earnestly on the subject: “We are like young sheep taken from their mothers, and just as we have learned to love the shepherd, he leaves us.” They were willing to do right, and wished to be taught. The Bible they owned to be all-sufficient, but already felt the necessity of government, saying, “We have been used to be led all our lives; not like Franks, each to think and act for himself.”

One thing about them pleased me excessively; the kind way they spoke of those of their faith who had persecuted them. They begged me to write to some of the missionaries and state their case, and ask them to send a priest, or a teacher, or at least to write to them; “For you know,” said my host, “how writing makes love—how sweet it is to hear from those we like.”

The form of epistles such as those of the

Apostles had ever struck me as too exclusive, but now their excellence first broke upon me. Their friend, their teacher, their pastor, surrounded by other friends, heavy cares, perhaps, or onerous duties, still thinks of them. This, as the good man says, “makes love.” “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son. This, then, is the message we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” Then, as now, those words are perfect. Who can deny they are fitted for every clime, for every age? Of course I promised faithfully to fulfil their request—a promise I performed on my arrival at Latakia. Would that any labour of my life had left such a print behind as this good man’s had done!

The whole of the previous day the road had been on an ascent. On the following it continued so for two hours and three-quarters. The scenery wild and grand, the whole mountain a pine forest. Ibrahim Pasha cut five

hundred thousand trees in this mountain: as many more might be felled with advantage, as they jostle each other, and thus drawn up and cramped grow thin and weedy. None were very fine, but vast numbers were tall well grown trees. On arriving at the summit of the pass, which is on the shoulder, where Djebel Okral proper joins on to the Djebel Kosier, the view is fine and extensive, embracing the lower heights of the range and many a wooded gorge and valley to the sea. I had proposed visiting the summit on which is said to be a ruin. A violent kick on the knee-pan from a vicious horse which the servant held carelessly, prevented my venturing: it is about two hours, or perhaps three, from Casseb. The top of Okral was hid in clouds.

We now commenced our descent. A fountain stands by the road side, an ancient work of one of the early Saracens. The forest had here been dreadfully abused. Every tree near the road was cut, as if for the very purpose of killing it, though hundreds of others were strewn about. Fires had been kindled at the foot of every one, and many had thus been burned: others had

been cut down and lay rotting. Here and there tents were scattered about, having a cultivated spot near them.

Many Turkomans encamp on these heights in summer, but I saw none. The property belongs exclusively to the Sultan. The sound of the pipe was heard at intervals, played by a lonely shepherd-boy, sitting in the shade. There were few birds : we saw several vultures, who seemed to have little to do, for they followed us. At last entered the undulating plain, and saw far off the height on which the Castle of Latakia is built. Arrived safely at sunset, having done the fourteen hours of road in ten.

News had arrived, or been invented, of my having been killed. Messengers, letters, flocked in : these had to be read and answered ; and scarce was this duty over, when a dear friend arrived from Aleppo. Our travels had been twisted over each other most curiously, and without any arrangement of our own, first at Constantinople, then at Mosul ; at Van, at Aleppo, and now here. Possessed of a competency fully adequate to all his well-regulated wants, with wish and will to settle, he con-

sidered the Lord had granted him his fine frame and powerful understanding to serve him actively on earth ; disdaining the ease his means could command, he roamed to do good to plead his master's cause. Dear —— ! I may not name you, for your sensitiveness will disdain such laudation, but thus without naming I must admire you, and thus vent my love ! Nor were his hours of rest those of idleness ; in those he communicated the glad tidings of great joy, which his own heart so felt ; which his whole life was an endeavour to illustrate.

One day a sheik in much repute among his people, the Ansayrii, called upon me. My friend, while I was occupied in another room, entered into conversation with him on the Bible and other religious subjects. Shortly afterwards, he went with me to have a few moments' conversation ; a consular agent, not the English one, came also. I said, " Sheik Hassan, what do you think of what the priest says ? " he was going to answer, when the priest said, " Oh, that is all nonsense : it is worn out." I repeated my question, when the consul said, again, " Oh, the sheik knows that is all folly." I said,

“Pray allow the sheik to answer for himself.” Sheik Hassan then said, in his own sincere truthful manner, “Ya beg, there is much reason in what he says ; I must think of it.”

I made many endeavours to get a school instituted. There are few among them, except the lowest, who cannot read and write. Perhaps many may cavil at the mode of persuasion I adopted. It was addressed to their self-interest, pointing out how we, a small island, by skill, industry, honesty, and truth, under God had become what we are ; how knowledge was communicated ; how, by means of printing, men, as it were, never died, but were ever alive with us, teaching us the result of their experience, the effect of their researches : how, thus by study, young men were endowed with the knowledge a man's hair had become grey in collecting ; how this was the road to wisdom and to wealth ; how, under this, their sons would become great, and turn the resources of their beautiful country to the best account.

My friend had several conversations with this hitherto unknown race. As my house was

their resort whenever they came to the town, I may say, in fact, that nothing was done without my advice. Sheiks came from the furthest parts to see me; presents, villages, even, were given me; and the mountains are full of boys, girls, mares, and houses known as mine.

The weather was getting sensibly hotter. My friend was anxious to repair to Jerusalem, and I had a great desire to see the southern portion of the mountains. To travel with such a companion was a pleasure indeed; the poor horses were had up from grass, when they had just time to stretch their limbs. A few traps were pushed into the saddle-bags, the books selected, and all was again ready for the road—a leave was taken of friends, and we were off.

The following story was told me, and as I heard it from one who neither knew I was an Englishman, nor bore any particular love to our country, it may be relied on as genuine. One evening sitting among the rocks with a party of natives, the conversation turned on flags. A man sitting there, said to a stranger, “Why do the English put the *wyheed el win*,

the unicorn, on their flag?" and then related the following story of it, as one well known through the length and breadth of the land:—
“The unicorn is found in a vast country south of Abyssinia; there the animals, undisturbed by man, live after their own laws. The water does not flow in rivers, but lives in the bosom of the soil; when the others wish to drink, the unicorn inserts his horn into the earth, with this he scoops a pool, satisfies his own thirst, and leaves what he does not require to the rest. So these English have the privilege of first discovering all things, and then the rest of the world may come afterwards.”

The story was flattering, and the rest all assured the stranger (a native of Mosul) of its truth.

CHAPTER XII.

Gebaile—Mosque of Sultan Ibrahim—Kalaat el Merkab—Civility of the Moutselim—Foray of the Ansayrii—Merkab—Tradition of its Erection—Village of Deir Sufran—Character of the Villagers—Theological Discussion with a Priest—Seclusion of Women in Syria—Village of Saradeen—Kalaat el Kadmous—Dress of the Peasantry—An Evening with the Ameers—History of their Migrations—The Kadmousie—Work on the East by Mr. Badger—Descendants of Ishmael—Ormuzd and Ahriman—Uncertain Origin of the Druses.

WE started about eight, and pursued our way along the high-road to Gebaile, which we reached early in the afternoon. My companion indulged himself and his horse in wanderings, while I gave a more careful look for sites I might have missed, and retook the bearings taken in my former ride along the same road.

At Gebaile we found three Christian families, who lived peaceably enough among the Mussulman population. The harbour is small, and barely contains water enough for the small vessels,—boats rather,—that carry on its trade. The rocks grow, and the dirt of the town tends to fill it up. On

the southern point we noticed several large pillars of grey granite, and the rock has been scarfed and cut, as if used in some building,—a wall, or rather its ruins, may be traced grown into the rock. The theatre is a fine ruin ; but others more capable have fully described it. From thence we walked to the mosque of Sultan Ibrahim, large and well built. It appears he arrived here by sea, why, they do not know, from Bockhara ; resided some years ; and then died in the odour of sanctity.

The mosque has considerable property. The village, whose sheik I rescued, belongs to it. The property is partly religious bequests, partly his own thus invested. The floors were covered with handsome carpets, and all was well kept. The property is under charge of a sheik and consul, who reside in the town, and make a good thing of it.

We had pitched a tent on the roof of the khan ; being both glad of intercourse with a countryman, it was early morn before we fell asleep. Raymond of Toulouse sold Gebaile on his march south, so it was spared the horrors generally perpetrated by the holy warriors. The early dawn saw us on the road ; and we ate our breakfast by

the ruins of Banias, where we traced out the ruins of a house, and I saw a well-built portion of a wall. Leaving the beach, we crossed the river of Banias, and began the ascent to Kalaat el Merkab ; passed through the Mussulman town of that name, and up the steep hill on which the castle stands ; round the southern face of which the road skirts. In many parts the wall had been patched, but generally was perfect, made of black and white stone, in alternate layers, well built, and mortared. In some places, masses had fallen unbroken, and lay in the road whole as they fell. This is said, and probably with truth, to have been the work of an earthquake. In places the rock has fallen, and the wall or tower remains hanging in the air. It is seldom indeed we see the works of man, with all the care, ingenuity, and art bestowed upon them, survive the strong and artless works of nature.

A flight of steps led us up to the gateway, arched and ribbed. There we left our horses, and set out with the Moutselim's scribe, who had come to meet us, to view the place. The castle is very extensive, and was surrounded originally by a high strong wall ; further defended by towers placed at small distances from each other. The southern

end seems to have been the principal one, and was therefore defended by a stronger wall, and contained huge towers of defence, vaults for stores, the grand reservoir of water, the church, &c. The inner wall had a passage in it, parts of which are still tolerably perfect. The church is lofty, large, well-proportioned, and plain; the pillars of the Corinthian order, slight, but bold and handsome. There were in it no ornaments, even on the stone. The keblah, or praying point, was built in the southern wall, so the Mussulmans prayed across the church.

The Moutselim sent to ask if he should pay his respects to us, or wait till we descended; and, spite of our wish that he should not inconvenience himself, he came and kindly showed us all over the place, leading us to what seemed to have been the lid of a sarcophagus built into the wall. He begged us to give him an explanation of its contents. There is also a tradition that huge stores of treasure are hid over the door, where they are kept by magic spell. He said an Englishman had told him his walls were impregnable to artillery. His father had also purchased an 18-pounder from an English merchant vessel,—a fine old Govern-

ment piece. This enjoyed enormous reputation at the castle, and on one saying it would be better to mount it, such assistance was declared unnecessary for a piece of its powers.

Our inspection over, we repaired to his room, where we were treated with the customary pipes and coffee. While there, news was brought in of a meditated attack of the Ansayrii, who had, about twenty days previously, carried off some twenty head of cattle belonging to a Mussulman village within the Moutselim's mockatta.* This roused all his energies; so, condoling with him, we took our leave.

The rest of the interior of the walls,—the upper portion of the castle,—is now filled with houses: there may be seventy, perhaps, within the enclosure. The ditch, which only runs round those parts least defended by nature, is lined with stone. It is now planted with mulberries. The whole population seemed wealthy,—at least, well dressed. Their women wear the large white shroud, which envelopes them to their feet, like the town people, therefore must perform little field labour.

The Moutselim told me his ancestors had resided at the castle five hundred years, and the governor-

* District.

ship had descended with them. He governs the mockatta, or district, which is of considerable size, stretching south to the river south of Deir Sufran, the Nahr Merhehee ; north to the Nahr Sin or El Melak ; and inland to some near heights. The district is peopled by Mussulmans, Christians (chiefly Maronites), and a few Ansayrii villages scattered about.

Merkab is the Mergath of Adrichomius, and is said to have been built by the Greek Emperors, and that the Bishops of Balanea translated their see here when their own became insecure from the attacks of the Saracens. Others say it was built by the Knights Hospitallers, and with such speed as to be regarded by the Saracens as the work of demons. From its position, it may have been Margat : a dot in Arabic would transfer Markab or Mergat to Merkab, the dot being the only difference between B and T—no difficult mistake. Mills thus relates its fate :—

“ In the reign of Keladun, the third Sultan in succession from him who had wrested so many cities from the Christians, the war was renewed (A.D. 1287). The restless Franks in the fortress of Margat plundered some inoffensive Mussulman

traders. An emir of Egypt made an attempt to punish this insult, but was repulsed. His master, however, swore by God and the Prophet he would avenge the wrong. The storm descended, Margat was taken ; but so brave had been the resistance of the knights, that it procured them a safe and honourable retreat to Tartousa ; and the Sultan, dreading the possibility of future opposition, razed the fortress."

Among the people there is a tradition that the Franks built it ; but this term they apply to all who warred with the Turks, so it would apply equally to the Greek Emperors. I have before related the story of the Bint el Melek, who defended it so gallantly. There is a perfectly level piece of ground some way north of Banias. This they call Maidan el Hodera, or the open place of the mare, from the following circumstance :— Beni Hetal was a knight renowned as Antar (his fathers were renowned, but he more renowned than all). Those who hated him, dug a pitfall, and covered it with earth, for him to pass over, fall, and perish in, for they hated him, and feared his arm, resistless in battle. As his mare approached, she sprang over the place, his army

was saved, and he swept on, conquering all, till he reached the boundaries of the earth.

We left Merkab, and descended by a road to the south. Below the castle is a large building, of seemingly great antiquity : for what purpose it was destined, I do not know. Beneath, on the beach, is the mina (port) of Merkab. The country beyond Merkab, south, over which we now rode, was prettily varied by hills. Under the shelter of the greater heights, stood several Christian villages. The soil was most peculiar, or rather the rock, which is here but lightly covered with soil,—a species of red cinder,—in small particles, but slightly caked together. This lower range, lying between Merkab and the sea-beach, and stretching south seven or eight miles, was well cultivated, and produced corn, mulberry, figs, &c. in abundance. The Christians spoke well of the aga, who, they said, was a fair, kind man. I found him civil and intelligent.

We now mounted a dreadful hill, whose sides were clothed with gardens and plantations, and reached the large Maronite village of Deir Sufran (yellow village), situated on the top of a fine table mountain. On our way we had passed a tel

crowned by a species of fort, and a building of apparently the same style as the castle. The village of Sufran is still very large, and formerly contained a thousand houses : it is now, however, under the tainzimats, (reforms) reviving. Its inhabitants are a fine independent race, and have gallantly held their own among their neighbours, both Turk and Ansayrii. The ground on the side of the hill itself, and of the plain to the sea, belongs to the villagers, among most of whom it is subdivided, and its cultivation does them credit. Relieve them from the servile obeisance to their priests, which extends to all things temporal and spiritual, and they would start forward rapidly on the race of improvement. This, however, would be a task of great difficulty. France nominally protects all those she is pleased to style Latins, and as steadily inculcates the dominion of, and obedience to, a priesthood subservient to her purposes.

The sheik of this village, a Christian raised to that position by the French consul, because he married the daughter of his dragoman, was condemned to the galleys for his robberies and crimes. The consul stepped in, and arrested the execution of the sentence. We sauntered over the village,

where our reception was most kind, and then retired for the evening. My companion fell on the priest, who, self-conceited, from having been long the undisputed, unquestioned lawgiver, entered into the contest—*impar congressus Achilli*. He met my dear friend's attack, and maintained the Bible was not a fit book to be in the hands of his flock ; and that praying in a language none of the people and few of the priests understood, was an advantage they ought to appreciate : that the priests could thus pray for them, preferable, he affirmed, to their praying for themselves. These general points well and forcibly put, are better than any extraneous discussions. The priest was one of those who

“ Though vanquished, he could argue still,”

and I sank to sleep with his dictatorial voice laying down infallibilities, ringing in my ear.

The women of this village fled our approach with more than Mahometan strictness. The news even that we were coming put all the female portion of the population to flight. This is curious, as the Ansayrii women make no attempt at covering their faces, and stand freely about, entering even into conversation when spoken to.

Neither are the Mahometans of these parts, except in the towns, by any means so strict as in the south ; many of them, the Koords, Turkomans, &c., not even veiling.

It is worthy of remark with regard to Syria, and my experience has confirmed its truth, that while in the north more liberty is enjoyed, in the south a man may not see his sister. In a journey from Beyrout, south, the traveller will find, at each advance on the road, women more strictly secluded, while from Beyrout, north, he will find them less so at every stage. At Beyrout itself, notwithstanding its intercourse with Franks, and the gradual change of habits and manners they have introduced, the women still are closely secluded—I speak of all faiths and sects—while, at Tripoli, he will find them doing the honours of their houses, and gracing the reception-room. At Latakia he will find them as full of conversation, and infinitely more agreeable than the men : so on to the Orontes : north of that, the Christians will hardly permit the approach of a stranger, and all the population will shun his intercourse.

The view from the house-tops was fine, commanding a noble expanse of valley and mountain,

plain and sea-coast ; from it we got excellent bearings, and thus were able to fix points right across the range. Leaving the village on the following morning, we took an easterly route into the mountains. They were poorer and more barren than in the northern districts. There were only a few cultivated patches, here and there bushes, and a small-leaved holly covered the mountain sides, which were wild, precipitous and difficult to travel over. We took our meal under some trees at the small village of Saradeen. The people about here, chiefly Ansayrii, were a smaller and darker race than those of the north, spare-limbed, wretchedly dressed ; and all wore an air of more poverty and wretchedness than in those districts exclusively inherited by their sect.

After a short kief we mounted, and wound along a wild mountain side through a forest of myrtle and holly : crossing the valley, the ascent of the farther side of which was a painful task for the horses, in four and a half hours from the time we started, we reached the pretty little village of Tanete, situate in a niche in the mountain, surrounded by corn patches and plantations. Our guide, an Ansayrii, here insisted on eating. I

entered one of the houses, where the three wives of the sheik were actively engaged in their domestic employments, and held an amusing conversation on their family matters. I left them engaged in a friendly argument as to which was the loved one of her lord, a subject in the elucidation of which they entered on rather delicate details.

Late in the evening we approached the Kalaat el Kadmous, of which we had several times during the day caught glimpses, and sent a servant on to beg hospitality of the Ameers—ourselves proceeding more leisurely. The castle stands on an isolated rock, amid great and imposing mountains. It consists of a work on the top of the mountain, whose sides, partly by nature, partly by art, have been made perpendicular ; on the top is a badly built wall, running round the crest of the hill ; within, a few miserable houses. The village is built on the south-east and southern side, close under the rock on which stands the castle. We were most kindly welcomed by the Ameer, who received us in the guest-room, the floor of which, a great luxury here, was covered with cushions and carpets. The village is also

surrounded by a low wall, has two gates : on the stones of one are several inscriptions ; but as the Ameer from above, and a good number of people about were looking at us, I felt a delicacy in copying them. There are, also, a bath and a mosque ; however, I do not believe they ever use the latter, having it merely as a pretext and a cloak.

Of the women we saw nothing but a few old ones ; the men were large and fleshy, but neither well-knit nor good-looking, though among them were many different types of face ; some fair, some very dark. They are dressed in fanciful colours, and many wore dresses of silk. I saw no marked distinction of dress ; the silk gown of red picked out with black ; black, blue, and white trousers, and the Homs jacket, or else the open-sleeved embroidered one, common in the towns ; no colour seemed peculiar to them.

Our servants cooked our dinner. While it was preparing we went up to the castle, which has been rebuilt, or rather the wall has been slightly repatched, and a new gate made. At the door was an old man, with a loaded pistol ; he watched there day by day ready to fire the alarm on the smallest

trace of danger, for the Ismaylee, though nominally at peace, are in perpetual dread of an attack from the Ansayrii. The gate led up some steps which brought us to the platform ; here there was nothing except the houses of the Ameer, Moutselim of the castle—the one his own dwelling, the other his harem ; they ascribe all this to Ibrahim Pasha, he sent a Mussulman Moutselim here, who, during his stay, allowed all these buildings to go to ruin. They spoke of his rule as one that had pressed on them with peculiar force.

In the evening the Ameers, who were frank, sat and entered freely into conversation with us. I had hoped we should be the first who had been here ; Burckhardt, I fancy, either visited it, or mentions it ; but the Ameer told us that an American traveller had paid him a visit some two years before. They all maintained they were strict and conscientious followers of the Prophet, though, as we shall see, I got him afterwards to contradict himself in this. Their mosque had no domes, the roof was flat, but the door seemed closed, and the whole had an air as if little frequented.

The Ameer told us that their people, numbering 20,000 fighting men,—or I think he said 27,000

people in all—came from Damascus 846 years ago; say 1010 A.D.; that they fought with and drove the Ansayrii from the castles of the mountains,—from Kalaat el Kadmous, Kalaat el Kohf, El Alehka, El Mazzyad, El Hoshn, El Merkab, El Mehalbee, El Sion, El Ailaka, and numerous others he mentioned, whose names I forgot; that several of these, such as Merkab, Sion, Mehalbee, and Hoshn, had been again retaken by Melek el Daher. If this was the son of Saladin, 1193 A.D., they did not enjoy many of their conquests long.

Volney ascribes the Ansayrii religion to the year 891 A.D., so the chronology may be correct. They now possess Kalaat el Mazzyad, El Kadmous, El Kohf, El Aleyka, and El Merkab, and, according to their own account, number 4000 fighting men. They have villages also in the district of Mazzyad, of Kadmous, of Mowary, and I heard of a few also in Djebel Akka, north of Tripoli.

At Kadmous there are two Moutselims, the Ameer Assad Heisin Habeel, the Moutselim of the castle, and the Ameer Selim Assed of the town; these are cousins; they were our kind hosts. Their cousin, the Ameer Melheim, commands at Mazzyad; he is nephew to Zogherly, who was there at the

period of Burckhardt's visit. This is the great family amongst them, and they claim an uninterrupted descent from the time they led their people from Damascus.

At this period they were called Salleha Hiub, or "The Righteousness of Job." Asserting they are descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham, the beloved, they style themselves Beni Ismael: hence Ismaylee. Their other appellations, Kadmousie, or Hhodansee, are given them from Kadmous. The name Mokledjye means robber: hence a family, village, or set of men, who are noted robbers, receive the name; but it is given to no sect: the Turks would use the term probably for all the mountaineers who resist their exactions; the name is found among the Ansayrii.

Volney mentions the Kadmousie as a sect of the Ansayrii; but the two people have no personal resemblance, and hold each other in abhorrence. In fact, either sect have told me the other was their natural enemy, and that it was right and their duty to slay them.

At Kadmous, the Ansayrii, who have some villages in the district, whenever they visit the Ameer, are disarmed at the outer gate. The Ansayrii have told

me, that, in former times, the Kadmousie slew a great religious chief of theirs, and this made a feud which no blood, no money can efface.

The Ameer told me, on a visit he paid me afterwards, at Latakia, that they had persons of their sect not only at Killis, but in the country around Mosul; that they there were known as Koords and Turkoman people; that, like themselves here, fearing the persecution of the Turks, they nominally are Mussulmans, and when in towns conform to the outward forms of their sect. His remarks on their faith, showed that, if a Mussulman, he at least did not fear to curse the Prophet.

Last year, while at Sheik Mattie, Mr. Badger was there, and was at that period finishing his work, whose research and interest induce me to hope it will meet with every success. He read me extracts from it, particularly with regard to some idolatrous tribes he had discovered around Mosul (I quote from memory).

He related many of their doctrines, ceremonies, &c., which I noted down; my ignorance as to whether the book has become public property, forbids my quoting; however I may say, that all

I gathered from the Ameer Assad who remained with me ten days at another period, leads me to pronounce them the same people. His secretary, not so reserved as his master, let out more than he wished. When the publication of Mr. Badger's book leaves me at liberty honourably to say more, I trust to prove my theory to the satisfaction of the public.

There *are* differences ; for when a sect has no doctrine susceptible of demonstration, great differences must arise ; when we consider also the distance, the utter want of communication, the illiterateness of their chief men, this cannot be wondered at.

They say they are descended from Ishmael, the son of Abraham the Beloved ; that they left Damascus, A.D. 1010 : the cause was, that they were persecuted ; this they own now. Though all Eastern dates are worse than useless as evidence, still, in this instance, the Ameer so often and so strongly maintained its truth ; said he had it written in their books ; that I am induced to believe it : the secretary also assured me of it, and showed me the passage in a book he possessed.

Had he not been my guest, I fear I should have tried to read this book, for he left it in my charge, but expressing a wish, however, that I should not read it unless I promised never to divulge its contents. This I would not do, so the book was locked up. Had I directly refused the promise, he would naturally not have spoken to me further on the subject, but I pleaded having already sufficient business on hand, and that we would talk of his holy book at a future time. He added, "Had you read it, you would have seen we have gathered the flower of your faith, and have the sanction of the Koran for our creed."

In the year A.D. 999, the Hakem reigned in Egypt, the "Hakem-b-amr-ellah, governing by the order of God," as he styled himself; soon came from Persia, Mohammed-ben-Ishmael, (Mohammed, son of Ishmael,) who was styled the Hakem-Hakem-b-amr-eh, governing by his *own* order. This, the Druses say, was the second meeting of Ormuzd and Ahriman, the two principles of good and evil, or darkness.

Here it would be irrelevant to the subject to enter further on the Druses. Mahommed,

son of Ishmael, the incarnation of Ormuzd, the principle of good, having preached his doctrines, was killed ; may not this be the Ismael from whom they take their origin ? The doctrines lead one to say no ; the dates yes.

CHAPTER XIII.

The three Letters commencing the Chapters of the Koran—Mountain of Djebel Seth—Tomb of Joshua—Mockatta of Mowary—Village of Borkah—Borge Safyta—Raid of the Ansayrii on the Christians—Capture of Sheik Abdul Hamyd—Confined at Erzeroum—An extensive Prospect—Necessity of having Religious Principles fortified—District of Kalaat el Hosn—Ruins of Hassan Sulieman—Carried off by the Sheik—Spring of Ain-el-Shem—Ambition seizes me—Wady Shaloof—Village of Brummanee.

WE passed the evening very pleasantly, and slept well on the Ameer's soft mattresses, a man watching by us all night. We left early, accompanied by guides sent with us from the Ameer, who were also intrusted with a letter from him to the sheik of a village under his orders, who was directed to give a receipt for us, and to demand one from the next. Descending into the valley south of the castle, we had first to pass through the town, which contains a bazaar. Here I saw a man reciting the Koran, Mussulman fashion, and one of the heads continued an argument he had before begun, on the meaning of the three letters commencing the chapters of the Koran. Neither on this, nor any other occasion

of my intercourse, did they seem anxious to avoid the subject of religion.

Our guides were an old man and a half caste, whose father seemed attached to the household of the Ameer, and whom he called Mohammed-el-Abit, Mohammed the Slave. He was married they told me to a Kadmousian woman, thus showing they admit strangers to their faith ; or they may only give them wives. Passing round the northern shoulder of Djebel Seth, we left our horses and servants and began the ascent on foot. Djebel Seth is of great height, and may be seen from Merkab, or Deir Sufran (the yellow village) ; it is also called Nebi Seth, and Djebel Shara, or the hairy mountain ; the ascent was steep and laborious : here on its side are clay-holes, from whence earthenware is formed ; also, there were banks of ashes, as if spit out or sent up from the earth—the cave, if cave it is, is very curious.

Steep as the ascent was, a man was ploughing a plot, his bullocks and himself working parallel to the mountain side. Two-thirds of the way up is the tomb of Tubal ; it is contained in a rudely-built dome, whitewashed. There was no inscription on the door ; the tomb, a long, mud-covered shell, was

full twenty feet long! There were giants in the earth in those days, seemed a text they had learnt : to place him here is *Tubal* (confusion) indeed. We ascended to the top, and there found the tomb of Seth, also about twenty feet long, covered with calico and baize ; it was a frame-work of wood ; some rough baskets on and near it contained incense.

Near under the same building was the tomb of Ousha, probably Joshua, or Hosea. This was rather shorter, but covered with calico. In an adjoining room was a prayer-room — mats and keblah. There are scarcely any legends current. A man takes care of it ; on the top is a reservoir of water, which seemed the best thing we found. Continuing our route the scenery was of the same wild kind ; here and there near the few villages were fine plantations and cultivation ; but all else barren. Passed the Tel Hassien, on the top of which are the ruins of a castle, once Kadmousian, but which has gradually fallen to decay : it must be a sad thing thus to see their race and sect fading from the earth ; were they enlightened, it might teach them a useful lesson. The Ameer told me at one of the castles there remained but one family ; they

impute all, however, to Ibrahim Pasha : poor fellow, he has much to answer for!

Along the coast all damage done, castles ruined, or what not, the natives say was the work of the English during the war ; inland, everything is Ibrahim Pasha. We passed several villages of Kadmousians, some large, with fine plantations. Passed the mosque, or rather tomb of Sheik Bedder ; it is said that anybody bound, passing here, will be released. All of the people with us objected to prove the truth of this : it is prettily situated at the head of a pretty valley shaded by fine trees. We now entered the Mockatta of Mowary, having travelled thus far on that of Kadmous ; and at last, after sixteen hours of most fagging work for the horses, reached the Ansayrii village of Borkah, where we were lodged in the house of a great sheik sometime dead.

We were well received ; the room was larger and loftier than any I had seen among the Ansayrii. The sheik's brothers, and father, a very old man, did the honours ; but all the property belongs to the stranger, the traveller, and the poor ; such being the request of the former proprietor. Noticed tombstones to-day of a different

description ; on one side a sword and knife carved, on the other a pipe ; probably it may have been only the fancy of the mason, or a description of his habits of life ; if so, it might be put on all the tombstones : at the foot were two six-pointed stars.*

Left early ; being anxious to reach our destination. The village of Borkah is large, and situated in a beautiful and productive valley ; we rode along its groves, patches of arable, figs, mulberries, and, far more useful, a river broad and deep, which can be led over every spot of ground. We were now but four hours from Safyta, whose square tower had long been visible, and the whole country was beautiful ; the hills, richly clothed with soil were less lofty ; the valleys broad and rich ; the country well, even carefully cultivated ; several streams intersecting each other, and villages showing a denser or rather less scanty population. We are now in the Mockatta of Brumana, or Safyta ; it is under a Moutselim sent from Beyrout : he resides

* Over the door of every Ansayrii house are two small loop-holes, one to admit the coming spirit, if a birth occurs, the other to allow the egress of the parting spirit ; there are two windows, that these spirits may never clash. A guest-room has eight, as many guests often sleep in it. The holy water, bottled, is suspended in two bottles close to these windows.

at Toglea or the village of Brumana, or Doagees, which is a sort of capital in the mountains garrisoned by some two hundred and fifty irregular soldiers. Leaving this with its ruined tower of Toglee far on our left, we passed the Borge el Jemash, a small ruined tower with low pointed arch door, and vaulted chamber; and crossing a broad deep valley we ascended the mountain on which Safyta stands.

Riding through the groves of mulberries we passed the tower, and found the baggage, which had been sent by the plain by the sea coast, established in the dwelling of the scribe of the district, who has a stone house with three or four rooms, exquisitely situated on the summit of a hill close below the Borge Safyta or tower of Safyta. All the Christians waited on us, nor did I ever see any so well or richly dressed; silk gowns, gold embroidery, scarlet cloth. The house would be one of the most charming residences possible, as far as a fine view went, for the summer; and it affords conveniences seldom found in the mountains,—windows, and stone walls.

Some time back an Ansayri sheik at Safyta—one of the two highest in the mountains—(my

friend Sheik Habbeeb being the other), resided near here ; Sheik Abdul Hamyd, or Sheik, the Slave of Hamyd. He seems to have been imbued with what I never elsewhere found among them—an active fanaticism ; and he stirred up the Ansayrii to attack the Christians. Probably the pride and arrogance of the other party induced him ; however, a quarrel between some individuals set fire to the matter. The Christians armed, the cry went forth on the mountain top ; “ Sons of the Said, to arms ! Alienne to war ! ” And five thousand Ansayrii marched on Safyta ; the Christians did not attempt resistance, and their houses they say were completely plundered. This, from what I saw and have heard, was not the case ; probably they left but little to be taken, as they had been some time prepared for flight ; though, on the other hand, the enemy no doubt took all they found. Some persons caught were beaten ; none that I heard of were killed, or seriously hurt. The government promised to make good the damage ; a promise they have not, probably never had, the smallest intention of fulfilling. Sheik Abdul Hamyd, who resided a short distance down the valley, was written to, and all was over. An aga or effendi

from Tartousa was dispatched to him with a train of irregular troops ; the precious letter and the assurances of the Effendi, lulled any suspicions he might have, and he received them hospitably. After talking some hours, it was proposed he should ride, with the Effendi, up to the Borge and settle some matters. The unsuspecting fanatic mounted his horse ; the irregulars, under their Derri Bashi, clustered round him and galloped off. Vain was the cry to arms from the house-top and mountain peak : fifteen thousand men mustered, but he was already on the plain, and shortly after lodged within the walls of Tartousa ; subsequently exiled to Stamboul ; having been sent by sea to Beyrout, for fear of a rescue if transported by land. The Ansayrii offered sixty thousand piastres for his release ; and the only thing which deterred the consuls here, or the great men, from undertaking the job, was that the money was to be paid when he entered the house at Safyta ; they, however, offering to give good security that they would fulfil their bargain. Two of the consuls begged me to influence the Ansayrii, to pay a part beforehand ; not that they fancied they could procure his release, but to make sure of the money.

For some time the Ansayrii were in total ignorance of his whereabouts, so they sent a trusty person of their own sect to Beyrout, who there learned that he had been sent to Stamboul, whither he followed him : here he lost all clue. Starting thence on any vague report, he would find after a tedious journey some other exile. He thus traversed half the northern provinces. At last he found him, and brought back the news that he was well and at liberty. He appears to be at Erzeroum, by their account, where he is under the protection of a rich Turk, who treats him with great kindness, and has given him his daughter in marriage.

Safyta is divided into three villages ; the one nearest the Borge or castle (properly tower) which crowns the hill, is Turkish. Close below reside the Christians ; and some distance below again in the valley, is the largest town almost of the Ansayrii. They have also a portion of the town to the north under the Borge ; but seem not to have profited by the plunder, as they look wretchedly poor ; whereas the Christians were well dressed, and the women ornamented with gold. The Borge is a large square tower ; a Pasha mined one of its corners and endeavoured to blow it up : either this or an

earthquake has much shaken it, and it now totters to its fall. Over the door, situated on the west, is a Greek cross ; and entering by a low narrow door, to which we must climb, for it is six feet from the ground, we enter a large, fine church. Rude and little ornamented, its just proportions alone make it handsome : this is still used by the Christians. A staircase in the thickness of the wall leads us up to a perfect room ; a row of buttresses supports, in the centre, the inner springs of the arches ; these are plainly, but handsomely ornamented. Ascending another staircase, a dark slippery task, we reach the top, and find an extensive, wild, and varied prospect on the coast. We can see Tripoli, the Rass el Shakkey ; north to the high lands over Latakia ; south in one long glorious snow-covered, cloud-piercing range, lies the Djebel Akka, the northern portions of the Lebanon ; east, to the western morning highlands of the Ansayrii, with the famed castle of El Hosn ; north the Djebel Seth, Nemir, and other peaks fill up a range as varied and wild in its scenery, as the fierce races that inhabit it. Beneath, a broad plain or rather extensive valleys ; and a narrow peak running east, joins the mound. We stand on

its broken heights, villages in valleys, high groves and tombs glistening in their whiteness; rills, rivers, and gorges fill up the scene.

About twenty people accompanied me to the top; not one could tell me the name of any of the peaks, so the taking bearings was a difficult task. The tower is the only portion of the building now standing; formerly the mound seems to have been surrounded by a *revêtement* wall similar to those at Aleppo and Homs; and within this again may be traced a second. A part of the western wall and gate still remains, similar to those at Mehalbe; and on the east there are some vaults and open arches: the whole seemed a Saracenic work, but, from the cross, that could hardly be, and the stone seems to have been there from the original building of the place.

It was with a thousand regrets I bade adieu to my companion. After a long residence, or rather long wild wandering amidst Turks, infidels, and idolators, it is pleasant to find one with whom one can speak freely, whose springs of action and nature are the same. The fine good principles of my friend also were valuable supports: living among heathens, insensibly one learns to forget

one's own faith while one despises theirs ; and it was with a feeling of great regret that I turned from Christianity, to talk, to think, to dream of idolatry. Half the night was spent in parting words, and in the morning we descended, mounted our horses : one good-bye, and we took our several and separate courses, he to hurry to his bishop and give an account of his good deeds,—I to plunge into the midst of the mountains, to talk of gods in the sun, and gods in the air.

My course was north-easterly ; to the south lay the Mockatta, or district of Kalaat el Hosn, or Hhussan, inhabited by a mixed population of Christians and Ansayrii. The country was wild in the extreme, but the villages more thickly scattered than in any other part of the country. In four hours and a half we reached the village of Ain el Morara, where I rested under some trees that surrounded the tomb of a sheik. A mile from this, north-east, reached the ruins of Hassan Sulieman, or Hassein Suliem, (the beauty of Soliman), and here we sought out quarters.

Hassan Sulieman is situated at the head of a wild gorge, and consists of a large mass of ruins, among which are several Ansayri cottages. The

first building I visited is about three hundred feet in length, by one hundred and fifty in width ; a long parallelogram whose four faces are north, south, east, and west, nearly. It consists of a high wall built of stones, some of which are eighteen feet in length, some smaller, and about six or seven in width, of a proportionate height ; these were laid together without any cement. This wall is generally perfect, save on the eastern face, where it has been thrown down ; this and other damage I should impute to an earthquake.

In the centre of each side is a gate or door ; that on the north being the principal, the one on the south the least ; the other two are different. On the door on the west the threshold is some eight feet above the ground. There are no ornaments ; but at either end of the architrave is an angel with folded wings in bold relief ; between are roses and heads alternately. On the lower portion overhead is an eagle holding the caduceus ; the ribbons from his beak are held by a man on either side. These are well carved. On either side of the doorway were niches about fifteen feet from the ground. The doorway has notches above and below, as if for a door.

On either end of the east face is a lion in relief. On the wall facing towards the door close at the head is a cypress tree. On the north is the principal doorway ; over this are the remains of a sloping roof, which presented its gable to the points. On either side of the door are two smaller doors and niches down to the ground. On a tablet is a long inscription, which the servants were immediately set to clean. Over the door, also, were the eagle and figures, as on the western one. The east door is plain, a niche on either side, some fifteen feet up. On either end of the architrave is an angel ; and a small figure, apparently a bust, over the centre. On the soffit is the same ornament ; between the angels are roses or flowers, perhaps acorns. The south door is small and plain ; the top has fallen in on a broken portion of the side-post. The architrave over the door is one solid stone. From thence we will pass within the wall. Entering by the south gate we come upon the back of a small temple of four large columns on each front, six on each side ; they are, perhaps, twenty feet in the shafts, ten from the ground, standing on a platform of stone. No capital is standing between the pillars ; the space was filled

up ; they are built of blocks, not of one solid piece. From the north front, steps descended some distance, and a road led to the door ; within the door are two semi-Corinthian pilasters, likewise on the inner side of the eastern door,—and other ornaments effaced. Leaving this, about fifty yards north-east are two buildings side by side ; the western portions are perfectly ruined ; the eastern front partially remains. Over the door of No. 7 is an eagle very badly carved, an eagle facing outwards, its head turned to the right ; two pillars stand one at either side of the entrance. An Ansayrii told me this was a church. I thanked him.

Early the next morning I repaired to copy the inscription ; hardly was I seated before it when a sheik, cousin of Sheik Habbeeb, came to see me, and I was carried off *nolens volens*. In vain I endeavour to frame excuses. No ; all stories were alike ; and I was forced to mount and accompany my new brother, his wild followers dashing about, firing and yelling like fiends.

The chief Sheik Achmed's house was about two miles from Hassan Sulieman. Over the brow of the hill another valley opened, beginning in three small gorges, in each of which was a source of water a

little higher up. The principal, called Ain-el-Shem's, was of great size, and half a mile from the spring fell over the rocks a good sized stream. On an isolated peak rising in the centre stood the ruins of Kalaat el Khaou, and just below the large rambling village of Macklayer. The valley was called the valley of the village of Macklayer ; such a name would only extend, of course, to the next village, when it would receive another name. This is an immense difficulty in the East—nobody knows the name of anything out of his own village. Each race, again, has different names.

On our entering the house of the sheik, differing only in that it was larger, from the houses of the peasants, I was received with tumultuous joy. Some threw themselves on the ground, kissing my feet ; sheiks kissed me all over—a ceremony, more pleasing, perhaps, had it been delegated to some of the fair girls who stood wondering by. I stated my wish to pass north, through the mockattas between us and Metua ; this they said was impossible. On my saying that perhaps they would not hurt me, I never having injured any ; he said, “Do not trust them ;” and on my pressing the journey as one I was very anxious to perform,

he said, "If you go, I shall accompany you with all my men."

A grand feast was prepared, and all who came were feasted in honour of my arrival; and the evening was passed in Ansayri theological discourse.

At daylight I mounted, resolved to go on my journey, and determined to try the northern route to complete my round of the mountains. The sheik accompanied me to his outer door, an honour he would not have conferred on a Pasha. In compliment to him I had not mounted. On emerging from the court I found three hundred armed men ready to accompany me, and a little way on was a still larger body. They yelled at my approach, shouting, "Ah Ya Bey, Eh Wallah,—blessed shall be the day; you are our banner, our holy, our father." I told the sheik I would rather go alone, he said, "If you go north, these go with you; I will not, really, dare not, see you go with less." The demon ambition arose within me; often, often had they prayed me to come and rule among them; one word, now, and they would have driven the Turks from Brummanee and left the mountains free. But a vision passed before me; and then: "To Brummanee, ya

Bey, to Brummanee—Ali sent you ; on, on !” I most unwillingly gave up my journey and promised to return to Tartousa.

The excited people grumbled at the lost fight, complaining chiefly that I would not trust them. The road lay along the height to the south of the valley ; below all was one mass of plantations ; the houses larger and better than those generally found. All spoke of more exemption from oppression than others ; this, in fact, is a district that seldom allows any interference, nor are the taxes as regularly paid as is consistent with the good order of a government. In an hour turned out of the valley into one lying parallel to the south, called Wady Shaloof ; the people wild and savage, far beyond any I had seen. The girls here stuck flowers in my poor horse’s head till he became a species of garden ; they were thrust into my stirrups. This was one of the places I had visited on a former occasion, when I went to see a very old and holy man who dwelt a little further south.

It began to rain, so I put up at a village of three cottages. An old man received me most kindly ; and horses, servants, and all, were accommodated beneath his roof. In the morning

the rain still continued, and the road could hardly be seen ten yards off, for the heavy mountain mist. As all was ready to start, I said to the sheik's pretty daughter, a girl of twelve or fourteen, "Mount, Ya Bint, I want you to come with me." At a sign from her father, she was up, and I had to defer her journey with me to a future period, when I would send for her. Her father was vexed at my rejection ; *spretæ injuria formæ* was visible in her sullen reception of my pretty apologies, and determined refusal of a present I tried to make her. However, on my whispering, "My wife, I order you to take it ;" she pressed my hand to her heart, put it in her bosom, and crossed her pretty hands over it.

In two hours, spite of rain, we reached Brummanee, or Blackness, a large Mussulman village, the residence of the Moutselim of Safyta ; about three hundred irregular soldiers are quartered here. The town is prettily situated and well built, has a large mosque and a wretched wall. The Moutselim was absent, but his scribe, a Christian, did the honours most civilly ; and, after a capital dinner, I pushed on for Tartousa, still eight hours distant.

CHAPTER XIV.

Summary Punishment—Tartousa—A Story of Eastern Justice—A Definition of Nothing—The Day called Urbat Eiub—Feast at the Saint's Tomb—Volney's description of the Ansayrii—Feud between the districts of the Drousee and El Amamra—Miserable condition of a poor Woman—In the midst of the Battle—Endeavour to act the Mediator—Become hostage between the Parties—Djebel Ermayen, or the Mountain of Forty—My mode of Life.

WHILE sitting in the Moutselim's room, a poor Ansayri was brought up for beating another, whose cattle had been grazing on his corn. The case was tried in a most summary way, and the fellow sentenced to two hundred cuts with the stick. By the tainzimât, such a punishment is forbidden. On my servants praying for his pardon, the *locum tenens* of the Moutselim at once forgave him.

As we left, I saw about a dozen poor fellows sitting outside the prison in chains. A round piece of solid iron, closed with a hinge and lock over the neck, or rather a chain, was passed through a ring to hold it together. The chain,

with another, was then secured to either hand, and down to the feet. They prayed me to have them released.

A ride of eight hours passing through the villages of Bedree and Aimtee brought me to the outskirts of Tartousa, where I visited the ancient church to the eastward of the town; except the western face and a small portion of the roof, it is still perfect, though now used as a cattle-shed. Its length must be 130 or 140 feet; its breadth about 90 feet, and its height some 60 feet, without the roof. It is of the Corinthian order, and the arches are supported by square buttresses covered on the four sides with semi-circular pilasters. The pulpit on the north side is fixed to one of the pillars; its proportions are very fine, and the simplicity of its ornaments sets them off. It is sad to see a place so easily capable of repair so desecrated.

Entered Tartousa, and took up my quarters in another corner of the café I had slept in before. The night was very lovely, the sky cloudless, the calm moon gliding noiselessly among the countless clusters of stars, the inhabitants of the place vivacious; so I sat outside, half-dozing, half-

waking, looking at the old church within the walls. This is a curious specimen of the crusader—the church fortification ; for a church, many emblems within proclaim it to be ; but, on the outward face, it is fortified, and seems to have mounted guns. The southern façade is very beautiful, nor could my lengthened gaze prevent my feeling it was very fine. A Turk who joined me, told me the following story.

Apropos to a remark I made, he asked me what present I had made to a person he mentioned. “Oh,” I said, “nothing—a mere nothing.” He said, “What is nothing? shall I tell you?—

“Once at Stamboul, before the Franks, the Sultan sat in the gate and judged his people, and a man came to him and made the following complaint: ‘I am a porter, and to-day this man, pointing to the defendant, called and said, “I want a porter.” All the porters cried, ‘I will do your work for so much,’ and so on. I said, ‘Take me, my lord, I will do it for nothing,’ and he took me. He traversed the bazaars ; here he bought bread, there oil, then meat, and every sort of thing. All these I carried. At last, arrived at his house, he

took the load from me and entered his house. I knocked and called, crying, 'Pay me my hire, pay me my hire,' until all the neighbours looked out in surprise ; at last, forced by my cries, the man opened his door, and said, 'You said you would serve me for nothing : go your way.' I said, 'Give me my nothing ;' and so we quarrelled, till I brought him to your holy feet, to cry, 'Justice : give me my due.'

"The Sultan knew not what to do ; the cadi swore, by his beard, the prophet even had never judged such a case. The Sheik Islam was fallible, and exclaimed, 'Eugh Allah ;' so the case was deferred, lest hasty judgment should warp the understanding,

"In the evening the Sultan clothed himself as a Dervish, and walked alone : a heavenly scent came from him ; the children leapt in their mother's wombs as he passed, for he was holy among the holiest : and he came to a ruined house, where were boys at play, and one sat on a stone and cried, 'I am Alem Penah ; I am Zill-Allah ; and I am Hankoar—bring in the prisoners ;' and two boys appeared. 'I am a porter,' one said : 'this man hired me, because I said, "I will do your

will for nothing." I toiled all day, and he refuses to pay me my due." The first boy said, turning to the other, 'Is this true?' 'It is,' he said, 'he would serve me for nothing, so when he had done, I dismissed him.'

"Then the boy Sultan turned to the mock porter, and said, 'So you want your hire, that is, you want your nothing : I will pay you.' And to the merchant he said, 'Go ; but in that thou hast taken usury from this man, and thereby defrauded him, disobeying the prophet of God, who says, "Give unto him who is of kin to thee his reasonable due," you shall pay to the keeper of the mosque the full hire of the porter for one day.' And then he said to the other, 'Advance, and take thy nothing.' And he caused a basin of water to be brought, and said, 'Put in thy hand, and bring out all thou canst grasp,' and he did so, and his hand returned empty as before : and the boy said, 'What hast thou got in thy hand?' and he replied, 'Nothing.' 'Take thy nothing, then ; thy just hire : depart in peace.'

"The Sultan rose and retired to his serai. The next day he followed the law laid down by the boy, and, after he was dead, that boy

taught wisdom to his son, for he eventually became Vizier."

Left at dawn. The mountains inland, on their western slopes, are chiefly inhabited by Christians, — in the southern villages, Greeks ; in the northern, Maronites. These cultivate, and often own, the land of the plain ; from the mountains to the sea, the whole plain to Banias is covered with tels, a few vestiges of ruins, &c. It was a grand feast-day : here all the Christians coming to the shrine of a noted saint, the day is called Urvat Eiub, the fourth day of Job.*

The tomb was on the beach, four bare walls of stones enclosing a low, rudely built tomb. I was early, but about seven or eight hundred persons had already assembled — Christians, Ansayrii, Mussulmans, &c. The poor saint seemed to share little of their attention, except that the women

* This is the Wednesday in the Holy Week, the week before Easter. They compress in the legend Job's sufferings into three days. On the fourth, he repented, rose, and washed himself. In commemoration, all come to the sea-side ; and, as I say, hundreds bathe, then feast, &c. The tomb at this place is a more modern one. Cyprios, who lived a life of denial and charity, dying, was revered by the people around.

See the Mussulman legend : it makes Job stamp with his foot at the order of the Almighty, and a fountain sprung up, in which he is commanded to wash. His first act of obedience is beating his wife, who remained too long on an errand. This part of the ceremony ought to be preserved.

put the linen they had damped in bathing (which is a part of the ceremony) on his tomb and enclosure to dry. Pedlars and sweetmeat vendors were there in plenty ; music, and old men dancing ; the women, chiefly Christians, sat apart, and enjoyed their feast in their own way. My servant Abdallah was here a great man, as the mass were people of his own village : he kissed all ; they examined his fine dress and formidable arms ; heard his wondrous tales of strange lands of Stamboul and Kourdistan. There was not a particle of shade : I recommended them most strongly to plant a few olives.

It was harsh to take my fellows from their pleasure ; I therefore waited for hours, and then we rode on to Gebarle meeting bathing women all along the coast ; arrived long after dark ; left at two hours after midnight, nor felt happy till, washed and dressed, I emerged from the bath, and found myself making kief on my own divan.

The day after my return, Sheik Abdallah of Kermein entreated me to accompany him to the mountains, to put an end to the war now raging between the two districts of the Drousee and El Amamra ; already three battles had been fought,

and the rage and the thirst for blood increased. Fearful that the government might take umbrage at the interference of a traveller, I left by night.

Volney mentions that the Ansayrii are divided into several classes, among which we may distinguish the Shamsia, or adorers of the sun ; the Kelbia, or worshippers of the moon ; the Kadmousee, who, as I am assured, worship certain characteristics of woman.

The Ansayrii, or, as they are generally called, the Fellaheen, *i. e.* the tillers of the ground, are divided into two parties, the Shemsia and the Classee. The one have Sheik Habeeb, Sheik Abbas, and Sheik Ibrahim Saide for their spiritual heads ; with them the priesthood is hereditary, and has been so for generations. The Shemsia have Sheik Abdallah of Demsuko, Sheik Sulieman, and another, I believe, north by Antioch, as their heads.* This feud is one of perhaps two hundred years' standing, and as the doctrines maintained on either side are not demonstrable by direct proof or acknowledged writ, they can never be arranged. These two parties hold no communication, and are often at war.

* They have each another religious head, now both in exile : Abdul Hamyd, and Mahomet el Bedour.

With regard to the error Volney fell into, and his deduction therefrom, that there was a sect called Kelbia, who worshipped the dog, which their name would imply, it is easily accounted for. The Shemsia inhabit the plain near the sea, north of Latakia, extending into the valley of Antioch away to Adana and Tarsus. The district of Kelbia (for it is the name of a district) extends from the Nahr el Kebeer along the plain almost south to Gebaile. This district is Claussé or Khamareè. The Kadmousee are Ismaylee, who are a different race.

The present feud was actively inflamed by a man of the Drousee carrying off a ploughing ox from the other party ; this produced a reprisal ; this a fight, and so on. Both sides see the great folly of the war, yet both refuse to come to any terms. Things were at this juncture when Sheik Abdallah of Kermein came and entreated my interference. I went with him alone, thinking it best not to have servants, and we reached the house of Shemseen Sultan at a little before daylight. Here we heard that on the previous evening, Shemseen had been sent for, and was now on the field of battle, some five hours further in the mountains.

Borrowing fresh horses, we pushed on as rapidly as possible, frequently dismounting, owing to the badness of the roads. In about four hours we heard firing, and turned to the spot whence it came. A noble valley lay before us, and up this we rode along the bed of a mountain stream, the scenery the wildest imaginable. The firing was now close to us, but we saw nobody : proceeding further, we came upon a poor woman. She had fallen down between two rocks, and there lay moaning ; painfully with each moan her heart's blood welled out from a dreadful wound just below the right breast. With the cloth from my loins, I bound it up, pressing a pad of stone tight over the wound, and placing her in the shade within reach of water, in as comfortable a position as the time would allow. By this time, the firing was pretty close ; luckily, the gully was deep, so we were completely protected. The sheik rather reproved me for taking so much care of a woman. I said, however, life was a thing we were not to throw away, and that we were bound to assist all. I now represented the folly of thus casting ourselves amidst fighting men in the dark. He said, " Do you fear ? " This one could not stand, so I

spurred on before, and at the first practicable place, dashed up the side of the hill, which was thickly covered with myrtle ; being, however, on horse-back, I offered a fair mark, and several balls passed near me, one cutting my leffie.

The sheik followed me, but dismounted. I said, "Are you afraid ? Ya sheik, come, mount and be happy !" A crest soon intervened between us and the other party, and about a hundred men rallied round us, from the covert where before they had been concealed. These we found were a party of Drousee who had been despatched from the main force to burn a village just before us ; by some means their march had been discovered, and they had lost four men and the poor woman, who had come with her husband to carry bread or Leban. Finding they were worsted, they had fled across the valley up which we had ridden, and there had made a stand, under cover of the bushes. They had left all their dead and wounded but one, and this was a noble-looking young fellow, to whom they led me. He had been hit in the mouth, though without breaking the jaw ; the bullet being fired had taken his head just behind the ear, and furrowed along the flesh to his chin,

making a long and now dangerous flesh-wound. This was sewn up (I mention this, for the natives have no faith in doctors or physic ; charms and potions, according to their notions, being more efficacious ; but such was their faith in me, that they at once complied with my orders,) and well swathed in wet bandages—he was led off.

Sheik Abdallah and myself again descended the valley, and mounted the opposite side, where we found full three hundred men. It had been no difficult matter to persuade the beaten party to retire from a fight they were anxious to quit ; but with the victors it was different. They had their foes now under their hand, and they were resolved to punish them, or, as they exclaimed, to finish the fight ; several times they were so fierce, I feared we should have been shot on the spot. Then there were a few who hung to my side ; others said—“ Peace ! why we can make our own ! ” Then I pleaded that they were but a small party ; they must not think that the main part were beaten because they had fallen with triple the force upon a beaten foe. Vainly I told them to make a bridge of silver for a flying foe ; never to close the doors of reconciliation, &c.,—they were deaf.

“Would you kill your brothers? Does wolf eat wolf? Sons of the Hydereen, followers of Ali faithful, hear reason—listen to one who loves you; who comes here alone, unarmed, merely to do you good.” At last I took aside a young sheik who led them: “Here is a knife,” I said, handing him one; “is it to be sheathed, or would you plunge it into the bosom of your brother?” He took the knife or dagger, and returned to his party, who agreed to retire if the others would do the same.

In the evening I reached the head-quarters, and found about nine hundred men, on a ridge, in face, as they said, of about five thousand, though probably of about the same number. Sheik Shemseen was there; his jolly, social, easy nature quite put out by his difficulties; and, as he told me, fighting one’s self was much easier than preventing others from fighting. The Sheiks of the Drousee were invited to meet, and make a conference, but they refused. At last, however, they agreed, if hostages were given, and I went over and remained with them. They treated me most hospitably, and put no restraint whatever upon me, even accompanying me over to the other party. On the following

day the sheiks returned, but no terms would they agree to.*

At this juncture, twelve hundred troops arrived at Latakia to enforce the conscription. Together with Shemseen, we worked upon this, stating to each party how the fact of the other joining the military, would crush them ; how soon they were to be called upon for the conscription ; how soon they, thus disunited, would fall a spoil to the oppressor—and at last a truce was agreed on, during which further terms were to be settled, and all hostilities cease.

On returning, I visited the Djebel Erbayen, or Mountain of Forty, a peak among the mountains south-east of Kalaat el Mehalbee. On it are the tombs of two sheiks, and from the top a most comprehensive view is obtained of the surrounding country. Five days from my departure found me

* In my interview with the Sheiks of the Drousee, the women were the most violent advocates for war ; many were perfectly furious. " Are our breasts without milk ? Can we have no more children ? Are we sheep, that we are to be driven without biting ? Your beard is white,—you Sheik keep at home, the youths and the men will go to the fight : and you,—you Beg,—your hand was made for the sword, your body for the war,—not to talk like a greybeard." Even the children yelled at me : " You wish us to be eaten, with your peace : if you love us, lead us to the fray." Girls said, " Do you love the young girl ? Go and fight bravely, and deserve her : she will not come to the coward. The faint-hearted is a poor lover." The young men seemed less wild than these Amazons.

again at Latakia. My life continued much as ever.

Rising at five, the whole morning until nine is dedicated to writing and learning Arabic, the hot hours of noon to visits from sheiks, &c., who consider my ruin as their head-quarters, many of them frequently sleeping for nights together on the mats. In the eve a lounge to the sea-shore, which, as I tell the Arabs, God has given to the English ; and at night again the pen and book are resumed. This is perhaps but a lonely life, for society there is none. But if the result thus hastily placed before the reader enlivens a weary hour, or in company with the traveller shed even the glimmer of light on his road, my travel is repaid.

CHAPTER XV.

Pliny's account of the Ansayrii—Emigrate under Sheik Hassan—Account of them by Gibbon—Description of the Ansayrii—Their Dress—Sheiks of Government and Religion—Their strict Religious Prejudices—Their Rites and Superstitions—Mode of Initiation—Manner of their Marriages—Their character for Honesty—Policy of Ibrahim Pasha—Restrictions with regard to Food—Outline of their Creed—Their modes of Prayer—Treatment of a Frenchman—Antiquity of planting Groves—The Rout of Heraclius—Conspiracy amongst the Greeks—Movement towards Greek unity—The Armenians compared with the Greeks.

THE Ansayrii are a race so little known, that any information with regard to them will not fail to be interesting to the reader. As yet my notes are in fact in too confused a state to be fit to lay before the public; but the following brief sketch may not be uninteresting.

The term Ansayrii seems at least as ancient as Pliny, who says, (Hist. Plin. v. 23) "*Cœle habet Assamiam Marsya amne divisam à Naycrinorum tetrarchia.*" This would give them an antiquity far beyond any that can be claimed for them; but

Pliny was probably correct ; so we may suppose the country, or rather mountains, were named then as now, the *Ansayrii*, and inhabited by another race. Meanwhile, there is a tradition among them, that during the time of the Caliphs of Damascus, they and their people lived in the mountains of Sinjar ; that the Caliph waged a war against the inhabitants of these mountains and exterminated them ; that among the great people then at his court, was their high chief, Sheik Hassan, who being in high favour, entreated the Caliph that he might lead his nation from where they lived to occupy the waste. To this, they pretend, the Sultan, miraculously converted to their faith, joyfully assented : and Sheik Hassan departing to Sinjar, led here his nation, who henceforth have inhabited these mountains.

Now though the Caliph of the Ommiades ceased to reign, A.D. 750 ; still, since then, there have been many sovereigns at Damascus ; to one of these we must ascribe the gift. William of Tyre mentions a race as met by the Crusaders on their march from Antioch, whom he calls Assassins ; they were under a chief, Sheik el Djebel—literally the Old Man of the Mountain—nor does the devotion they

showed at all differ from what they would as readily show to-day.

Gibbon says :—" But the extirpation of the Assassins or Ishmalians of Persia may be considered as a service to mankind. Among the hills to the south of the Caspian, these odious sectarians had reigned with impunity for above one hundred and sixty years ; and their Prince, or Iman, established his lieutenant to lead or govern the colony of Mount Libanus, so famous and formidable in the history of the Crusades. With the fanaticism of the Koran, these people had blended the Indian's transmigration and the visions of their own Prophet, and it was their first duty to devote their souls and bodies in blind obedience to the voice of God, &c." Now these so nearly resemble the doctrines of the Ansayrii ; their religion is such a mixture of the Magian and the Mussulman ; the names also, so nearly resemble each other, that perhaps (as yet I only venture to say perhaps), they may claim their right, their name,—a by-word and reproach among us all.*

* The Ismaelians of Syria (40,000 Assassins), had acquired or founded the castles in the hills above Tartousa in the year 1280. They were extirpated by the Mamelukes.

But little change ever takes place among the manners and customs of the East. In the much disputed letter to the Duke of Austria, exculpating Richard from the murder of Conrad, the date is according to the Greek form ; the Ansayrii alone, of all sects not Christians, use this date, and are ignorant of the Turkish date ; nor would the address be wrong, being such as a chief would address to an inferior : however, to lay before the reader more proof, I must require time ; let us pass on to their personal appearance.

They are a fine, large race, with more bone and muscle than is generally found among Orientals ; browner than the Osmanlee, but lighter, fairer than the Arab ; brown hair is not by any means uncommon. The women, when young, are handsome, often fair with light hair and jet black eyes ; or the rarer beauty of fair eyes and coal-black hair or eye-brows ; but exposure to the sun, and the labours they perform, soon wear them out. The traveller will see these poor girls staggering along under a load of wood a horse would hardly carry, and the child being suckled until two, or even four years of age, naturally tends to weaken the mother, who has thus, perhaps, on

very insufficient diet, to support three from her breast.

In dress the Ansayrii are Turks. According to the expression of the country they dress thus, as they regard white as their sacred colour, and deem it essential to be clothed in it. White turban, or cloth wrapped voluminously round the tarboosh that all wear; a white cotton shirt, with the long pendant sleeves; a belt of a species of red and black worsted girth stuff; a cloak (abai) or Homs jacket over all; and perhaps small, short, loose, cotton trousers under the shirt; over, being considered improper: the front of the shirt is unbuttoned, as to close it would be considered an act of disobedience to the Creator, who must at all times be allowed to look, unimpeded by shirt or anything, into our hearts.

With the women, the dress consists of the white cotton shirt, hardly differing from the men, a zenaar or belt, a jacket, similar to that of the men; trousers resembling European trousers, save that they are slightly fuller and tied at the ankle; a tarboosh and handkerchief on the head, or more generally a common handkerchief. They never conceal their faces though they keep retired, except

when the stranger is a guest in their houses, and then they will enter freely into conversation.

The nation, for such it is, being capable of mustering forty thousand warriors able to bear arms, is divided into two classes, sheiks and people ; the sheiks again into two, the Sheiks or Chiefs of Religion, Sheik el Maalem, and the temporal sheiks, or the Sheiks of Government ; these being generally called Sheik el Zollum, or Sheiks of Oppression. These latter, though some of them are of good families, are not so generally ; having gained favour with government, they have received the appointment : others there are, however, whose families have held it for many generations, such as Shemseen Sultan, Sheik Sucor, &c. The sheiks of religion are held as almost infallible, and the rest pay them the greatest respect. With regard to the succession, there seems no fixed rule ; the elder brother, has, however, rule over the rest, but then I have seen the son the head of the family while the father was living.

The sheik of religion enjoys great privileges ; as a boy he is taught to read and write ; he is marked from his fellows from very earliest childhood, by a white handkerchief round his head.

Early as his sense will admit, he is initiated into the principles of his faith ; in this he is schooled and perfected. Early he is taught that death, martyrdom, is a glorious reward, and that sooner than divulge one word, he is to suffer the case in which his soul is enshrined to be mangled or tortured in any way. Frequent instances have been known where they have defied the Turks, who have threatened them with death if they would not divulge, saying, "Try me, cut my heart out, and see if anything is within there." During his manhood he is strictly to conform to his faith ; this forbids not only his eating certain things at any time, but eating at all with any but chiefs of religion ; or eating anything purchased with unclean money : and the higher ones carry this to such an extent, that they will only eat of their own produce ; they will not even touch water except such as they deem pure and clean. Then he must exercise the most unbounded hospitality, and after death, the people will build him a tomb (a square place with a dome on the top), and he will be rewarded as a saint.

The lower classes are initiated into the principles of their religion, but not its more mystical or

higher parts : they are taught to obey their chiefs without question, without hesitation, and to give to him abundantly at feasts and religious ceremonies : and above all, to die a thousand deaths sooner than reveal the same faith he inherits from his race.

In their houses, which, as I have before said, are poor, dirty, and wretched, they place two small windows over the door. This is in order that if a birth and death occur at the same moment, the coming and the parting spirit may not meet. In rooms dedicated to hospitality, several square holes are left, so that each spirit may come or depart without meeting another.

Like the Mahometans, they practise the rite of circumcision, performing it at various ages, according to the precocity of the child. The ceremony is celebrated, as among the Turks, with feasting and music.* This, they say, is not a necessary rite, but a custom derived from ancient times, and they should be Christians if they did not do it.

* Abdallah, my servant, comes from a Christian village amidst the Ansayrii mountains. As a boy, he says, he used to tend his father's sheep. One day he was watching them as they fed near a stream ; he heard the noise of music, firing, and shouting, at a village near. Presently a couple of boys came down, and laying themselves on the banks among the rushes, they commenced covering themselves with the wet sand to stop the blood, at the same time making most doleful cries.

This is the same among the Mahometans, who are not enjoined by their prophet to do so, but received the rite from of old.*

I do not yet know if any ceremony exists at the naming of the child. But when a candidate is pronounced ready for initiation, his tarboosh is removed, and a white cloth wrapped round his head. He is then conducted into the presence of the sheiks of religion. The chief proceeds to deliver a lecture, cautioning him against ever divulging their great and solemn secret. "If you are under the sword, the rope, or the torture, die, and smile, you are blessed." He then kisses the earth three times before the chief, who continues telling him the articles of their faith. On rising, he teaches him a sign, and delivers three words to him. This completes the first lesson.

At death, the body is washed with warm soap-and-water, wrapped in white cloths, and laid in the tomb. Each person takes a handful of earth, which is placed on the body ; then upright stones, one at the feet, one at the head, one in the middle,

* See Herodotus, book ii. chap. 104. Gibbon makes the most of the expression. But this is irrelevant here; as most probably the Ansayrii received it from their mere Mahometan ancestors, we need not go back further for them. Ishmael would have introduced it among the Arabs, and enforced the rite as part of their faith, the Arabs enforcing it on their tributaries.

are placed. The one in the middle is necessary—They have the blood-feud,—the *Huck el Dum*. In war, blood is not reckoned ; but if one man kills another of a different tribe, all the tribe of the slayer pay an equal sum to the tribe of the slain,—generally six thousand five hundred piastres (60*l.*).

In marriage, a certain price is agreed on.* One portion goes to the father ; another to the brothers or males of the family to supply dress and things necessary for the maiden. This will vary much, according to the wealth of the bridegroom and the beauty or rank of the bride. It is generally from two hundred to seven hundred or a thousand piastres (1*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* to 9*l.* 10*s.*) Sometimes a mare, a cow, or a donkey, merely, is given ; if very beautiful, 100*l.* or 200*l.* is not an extraordinary price for her. The bridegroom has then to solicit the consent of the leessee, or owner of the bride's village, who will generally extort five hundred piastres, or more, before he will give a permission of marriage.

The price being settled, and security given for its payment, the friends of the bridegroom mount on the top of the house, armed with sticks. The girl's friends pass her in hastily to his house to avoid

* They will not give their daughters to men of any other race or religion.

their blows. The bridegroom enters, and beats her with a stick or back of a sword, so that she cries. These cries must be heard without. All then retire, and the marriage is consummated.

They are allowed four wives. The marriage ceremony is simple, and divorce not permitted. If one of these four wives die, they are permitted to take another. Generally, they have little affection for their wives,—treating them rather as useful cattle than as rational creatures. They never teach women the smallest portion of their faith. They are jealously excluded from all religious ceremonies, and, in fact, are utterly denied creed, prayers, or soul. The women themselves believe in this ; and do not, as one would fancy, murmur at such an exclusive belief, nor could any arguments of mine shake the belief they entertained.

The Ansayrii are honest in their dealings, and none can accuse them of repudiation or denying a sum they owe. They work hard in their calling, for Orientals ; to them is generally committed the agriculture ; and the wonder in my mind is, that they continue such an apparently fruitless toil, for from youth to age they labour, live on the coarsest fare, their houses are mere hovels, and yet they

are very poor. Whether they conceal money, I do not know ; but if they do not, what must be the extortions of the Government *employés*. Their own lavish hospitality is the great source of their poverty.

During the time of Ibrahim Pasha, the Ansayrii were partially disarmed ; and though there were districts he never entered, still his name was a terror, and the taxes were pretty regularly paid. Before his time, the country was farmed by three or two chiefs, who paid fixed sums, and ruled the mountains themselves. At that time, no force had ever penetrated them, nor did they give any troops, but were independent, paying tribute through their chiefs. While the war which drove Ibrahim Pasha from the land, lasted, they availed themselves of the opportunity to arm, and thus were again in a position to become formidable to Government. But Ibrahim had struck a blow at the independence of these tribes of Arabistan, they can never recover. He had taught them that honour and faith were marketable qualities ; and his gold made Arab destroy Arab, Druse Druse, and Ansayri Ansayri. This the Turks avail themselves of, for they are not slow at learning what redounds to their immediate advantage. The mountaineers are armed ; it remains to see what they will do.

The Ansayrii have signs and questions. By the one they salute each other, by the other they commence an examination as to whether a man whom they do not know personally, is one of them, or not. But these signs are little used, and are known only to a few ; as the dress, &c., clearly indicates them to each other, and almost each one knows all the chiefs, at least by sight.

Not only are the chiefs particular with regard to their food, but certain restrictions are observed among all. They will not eat or touch pig ; they will not eat the meat of an ox or sheep that is blind or lame ; some will not touch the meat of a female animal : fowls they eat : they will not eat animals shot, unless killed afterwards. Of gazelles, their only large game, they will not eat the female ; hares are forbidden ; wine and spirits are permitted, but to drink either before Christians or Turks is a sin ; while the chiefs only drink wine among themselves, and spirits before their co-religionists.

About smoking, the sects differ. The Shemsie declare smoking an idle habit, and wrong ; therefore they do not smoke. The Classie smoke as they please ; even their highest sheiks. They

worship Ali. In one of their prayers they say, "I declare I worship Ali. Ibn Abou Talib (the Ali of Mahomet), he is above all,—a God Almighty."

They regard Mahomet el Hamyd as the prophet of God, and use the Mussulman confession—"La illa illa Allah, Mahomet el Hamyd, Resoul e nebbi Allah," thus; but they omit all this when before Mahometans, saying merely, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is the prophet of God." Otherwise, they say, "There is no God but Ali, and Mahomet el Hamyd, the Beloved, the prophet of God."

I do not intend here to enter into their belief more fully; but it is a most confused medley,—a unity, a trinity, a deity. "These are five; these five are three; these three are two; these two, these three, these five—all are one."

They believe in the transmigration of souls. Those who in this life do well, are hospitable, and follow their faith, become stars; the souls of others return to the earth, and become Ansayrii again, until, purified, they fly to rest. The souls of bad men become Jews, Christians, and Turks; while the souls of those who believe not, become pigs

and other beasts. One evening, sitting with a dear old man,—a high sheik,—his boys were round him, I said, “Speak : where are the sons of your youth ? these are the children of your old age.” “My son,” he said, looking up, “is there ; nightly he smiles on me, and invites me to come.”

They pray five times a day, saying several prayers each time, turning this way or that, having no keblah. If a Christian or Turk sees them at their devotions, the prayers are of no avail. At their feasts, they pray in a room closed and guarded from the sight or ingress of the uninitiated.

This will give a general outline of the faith and customs of the Ansayrii. My intercourse with them was on the most friendly footing, and daily a little was added to my stock of information. Let me, however, warn the traveller against entering into argument with them, or avowing, through the dragoman, a knowledge of their creed. They are as ready and prompt to avenge as they are generous and hospitable to protect. To destroy one who deceives them on this point, is an imperative duty ; and I firmly believe they would do it though you took shelter on the divan of the Sultan. For myself, the risk is passed ; I have

gone through the ordeal, and owe my life several times to perfect accident.

A Frenchman, resident here many years, told the Ansayrii that his father had quitted this country very imperfectly instructed in their faith, and therefore unable to give him (his son) any instruction ; but he knew a little he had picked up here and there, and said, “ This is all I know : ” perhaps he learnt more of them. On one occasion Sheik Ibrahim* called on him at night to instruct him. Just as he was going to begin, the light was extinguished. The sheik left him, and ever after refused all communication with him ; but the other tribes, hearing the sheik had revealed some of their tenets to another, made war upon him.

I have at this moment a letter from a sheik of religion before me, one of many received from him and others ; the direction is as follows :—

“ That this may come to the hands of the Honourable Prince, my Seignior ; the Bey, the son of Beys, the Most Honoured—That his life may be long, God render it so.”

Within he speaks of our holy belief, the secret of the two we hold in common.

* The cleverest man among them.

I forgot to mention that they call themselves *Ibn Sad Muneneen*. *Muneneen* means “believer;” they also call themselves *Hydereen*.

The custom of planting groves over and near the saints’ tombs is derived from the greatest antiquity : idolatry seems always to vaunt itself on high places, and leisurely to nestle in groves. When the Jews entered the land, the inhabitants worshipped in them. The Jews themselves, when they perverted their faith, and followed idols, built high places and planted groves. The Druids, Daphne, all conspire to connect these with an impure faith. The Ansayrii seem, however, only to pray before these tombs prayers to others without any reference to the immediate sheik ; for they avow “Mahomet el Hamyd, whom Ali bless and consecrate, is our only protector.” We shall, I think, find that this religion commenced as a mere sect of Mussulmans, and that subsequent bitter persecution has led their sheiks, or religious heads, to deny all parts of the oppressor’s creed, and substitute fresh follies in their stead—that, in fact, mysticism was heaped on mysticism, till they themselves are puzzled as to their belief.

I was talking to-day to an intelligent Greek,

relative to the capture of the country in the first instance by the Turks. He said there was a book he had read, though neither its title nor whereabouts did he name, which said :—Heraclius at first immersed in pleasure at Antioch, refused to listen to all outbreaks, saying, they were but the perennial attacks of the Arabs, which his generals in the south would soon quell. At last he was roused by some of his wiser counsellors, and sent orders for a large body of troops, then at Homs, to march south. The general promptly enough obeyed the order, but being misled by a false report, he turned into the mountains, where a body of Mussulmans fell upon him at a disadvantage, and completely broke the spirits of his forces, who received such a defeat, that they deemed themselves ever afterwards incapable of facing such a foe. He mentioned likewise, that vast wealth accumulated among a few, rendered those few impatient of authority, and the many discontented with the few ; therefore, all wished for a change—the one offering them a chance of independent government, the other, as a change, which, as it would not lower, might better their condition. We may, however, trace the Greek in the love of

change—the extremes of every kind. The luxury produced by climate and indolence, could little withstand the fiery Moslem, to whom life was riches, death Paradise—

“ So fully flashed the phantom on their eyes,
That when the very lance was at their heart,
They shouted Allah, and saw Paradise
With all its veil of mystery drawn apart ;
And bright eternity, without disguise,
On their souls, like a ceaseless sunrise, dart ;
With prophets, Houris, angels, saints, descried,
In one voluptuous blaze, and then they died.”

The same man was describing to me a conference he had attended the year before at Jerusalem, consisting of the most influential Greeks in Syria ; several also from Asia Minor ; in which a correspondence—in fact, a conspiracy—was formed for uniting all those of the Greek faith, with the object of abiding their time to throw off the Musulman yoke. They were enjoined to keep this in view, and make it an engrossing subject among all classes ; so as to be gradually, a thing of course, which they were to be ready to support when the exigency occurred. Several bishops were the active promoters, and they stated that they were backed by the countenance of Russia, who warmly sympathised, and looked with pain on the oppression of

her co-religionists, whose independence she would promote with all her power. He asked me what course England would take in the event of the Greeks seizing Stamboul by a *coup de main*? This, I replied, would depend much on circumstances, the politics of the times, &c. ; but he might depend on one fact that would not alter, and was sure as day, that they were poor weak politicians, and Russia was using them as the monkey used the cat, and required them to do her dirty work for her, while their only change would be that of masters, and probably not one much for the better.

Since this I have been astonished at the movement towards that Greek unity I see everywhere. It is spoken of by all, and a wealthy merchant read me passages of letters from the north, that showed me it was widely spread. Some of the extracts read must have endangered my informant's cotton bales, they were so inflammatory ; and certainly his treasure chest, had the Pasha got wind of them. They are, however, not the race ; the Armenians have twice the strength ; and their very different natures would lead me to predict much more stability, consistency, and chance of

success from them. A resolute, plodding, money-making and money in hand race, they far outstrip the more showy Greek, who would fight for the plunder, or the cause, but certainly fall to the highest bidder; the others, more cautious and firm, would count well the cost, and boldly carry out the speculation.

CHAPTER XVI.

Pashalic of Saida—Rule of Ibrahim Pasha—Ruins and Antiquities—Mockattas of the Ansayrii—Their Tribes and Governors—Celebrated for the growth of Tobacco—Nahr-el-Kebeer—The French propose to assist the Ansayrii—Village of Hinadee—Quarrel with a Turk—Gross system of Injustice—A glorious Revel—Contrast between Man and Nature—Dedication of Children to their Saints—Suffering from Fever—A dashing Exploit—Recover my Steed—Tomb of Abdallah el Morovree—The Gardens of Gebaile—Piety of Sultan Ibrahim—Apparition of Ibrahim—Magical Erection of a Mosque—Borge-el-Sabbee—Strangely-tempered Mortar—Marriage of my Servant—Tartousa—Again practise Medicine—The island of Ruad—Mode of Water Supply—Ruins of ancient Fortifications—The Reiha Saltza—Antiquities in the Island—Visited by the Fariss, or Knights of Malta—The Montenaseras—Education for Sailors—Songs of the Children—Their dread of Foreigners.

BEFORE quitting this place, where I cannot but look back on the result of my inquiries with pleasure, it will be as well to describe the government, as it is a type of what is found generally over the Turkish dominions. It forms part of the Pashalic of Saida (for so the Pashalic is called, though the Pasha resides at Beyrout); a kaimakan (governor) resides at Latakia, who, though he receives his firman from Constantinople, is under the orders of the Pasha, to whom he refers in all cases. To judge of his authority by

his functions, the present one has no authority at all. In the town itself, the government is carried on by a Medjelis, or council ; at the head of this is the kamaikan, then the most influential Mussulman, the cadi, and the mufti ; and, by the late reforms, one is chosen from each acknowledged sect of Christians, to represent their wants and protect their interests. These decide all cases, try causes, &c. The police of the town consists of a tefangee bashee, or twangee bashi, and a body of men. The kamaikan has under his orders some hundred *bashi bazuck*, or irregular horse : the regular soldiers, of whom there were about three hundred, quartered in the town, were under their own officers—between whom and the kaimakan, as between the civil and military at home, there was considerable jealousy.

The town itself has much declined in trade, having lost what it had during the vigorous rule of Ibrahim Pasha, but it is again reviving, and cotton, oil, tobacco, &c., being exported, its little port is generally full of European vessels. The port is formed by a small indentation of the coast, and a projecting rock, protecting it, leaves a narrow, but deep entrance ; on the end of the

roof is a castle apparently Venetian, and the whole reef to the main is covered with fragments, columns, and blocks of stone; on the main opposite the reef are further remains. The harbour is now nearly filled with mud, and the land also has encroached considerably, as the galleys once floated where now the olive blooms.

The mina consists of magazines, built principally, I believe, within the last twenty years, and a large khan; but a few columns and a few handsome marble pillars attest its antiquity; a distance of some three hundred yards, partly burial ground, partly olive ground, separating it from the town: the mina is surrounded on its land face by a wall, which, however, does not extend to the sea. The town has many remains of walls, &c., though no other ruins, save the triumphal arch and a portion of the temple exist. Columns are found in all directions, here built into the walls, and there standing alone, a mournful piece of antiquity. In every part of the neighbourhood, digging brings to light stones and other marks of the size of the former city. Corinthian capitals, and a few Doric, sometimes of marble, are found.

At the back of the town, covering the place from the East, is the long hill, now olive ground, on which the castle stood. So completely was it destroyed, that no stones even mark its site. The Farouse* was said to be in the centre of the town; if so, the tale of the vast number of its churches might be true, especially if the Greeks were as generous in their zeal as the Maronites of to-day.

The kaimakan of Latakia has likewise the government of a greater portion of the Ansayrii Mountains. These are divided into mockattas, each of which has a governor, who is properly responsible for his people, and the taxes. As, however, among these mountains, the taxes are seldom paid, and there is no law, save that of the strongest, this is also pretty nominal. The plains between the sea and the mountains near Latakia are under the immediate rule of the kaimakan, and they show the effects of his paternal authority. The rest is divided into fourteen mockattas.

El Kalaat Howabee (*Owabee*): Moutselim,

* This is a Tel about 500 yards N.N.W. of the town. Tradition marks it as the site of an ancient church of St. George.

Achmet Aga Abdel Kader. This mockatta is inhabited by Mussulmans, Christians, Ansayrii. The Moutselim is a Turk, whose family have been long residents at the castle.

Kalaat el Kadmous : governors ; Emir Assad and Mahomed. Inhabitants—Hodamsee, Ismaylii, and Ansayrii.

Kalaat el Merkab : Moutselim ; Achmet Aga el Mahomed, son of Adeta, a Turk, whose family have been long resident at the castle. The people of the district—Mussulmans, Christians, Ansayrii.

Simt el Koble, Mockadam and governor ; Ali Jajar and Abdallah Mutrid, of the house of Ya Shoul. Ansayrii.*

Beni Ali, Mockadam and governor ; Succor. He and his people, Ansayrii (a wild set).

Kelbia, or Cahdahha : governor ; Ismael Osman and Achmet Jebour. Ansayrii.

Kalaat el Mehalbee : Ibn Hair Beg ; Mussulman and Ansayrii : governor, a Mussulman.

Beit Shielf, Shemseen Sultan, and Ibn Ismaen Nasoor Ali. Ansayrii.

Kalaat el Sion (*Sioun*), Jindar Achmet, Said

* This is a wild, lawless *Mockatta* ; the higher portions never pay taxes, nor submit to the Porte.

Mussulman. Nearly all Mussulmans ; a few Ansayrii.

Djebel Kraud : Mahomed Aga Ibn Yousooph. Mussulmans.

El Baier, Kara Mahomed. Mussulmans.

El Ujack, Haliz Aga. Mussulmans.

El Balloolee : Achmet Sullab. Ansayrii and Mussulmans.

El Drousee : Mahomed el Bedour. Ansayrii, (a wild set).

These are the districts and the names of the Sheik el Zollum, or Chiefs of Oppression, as the people significantly call them.

These districts are famous for their tobacco : from here the well-known Latakia is brought. There are different kinds : the first is best, the others good :—Abou Reiha, grown by the Drousee and Beit Shielf, blackened by smoke ; Ijedar, a yellow leafed tobacco, grown in the Djebel Kraudee (Koord) and Amamra districts ; Sheik el Bint, red and yellow leafed tobacco ; Bierlee, long-leafed ; grown at El Bier,—this is smoked among the people who like it the best.

No portion of the Sultan's dominions was apparently more misgoverned. Tyranny and oppression—the law of the strong ; and nowhere

is there more fanaticism. The milder rule spreading elsewhere is here unknown : murders are of daily occurrence ; robbery perpetual under such circumstances, it may well be believed.*

Finding Latakia far too warm, and that the Ansayrii, scared by the troops, dared no longer visit me, I resolved to take a last slow wander among the mountains before proceeding south. Many visits also remained to be paid, and for the sake of a little trouble, it was a pity to lose the good-will of many ; as each sheik not visited was annoyed at the honour of my presence being conferred on others, and withheld from himself : their jealousy on this point is extreme. So, late one afternoon, I started, leaving the heavy baggage to be despatched by sea to any future place I might fix upon ; not that much was left me, for on announcing my departure, the U.S. Consul, who styled himself

* The Druse is praised for his hospitality, while the Ansayri is pronounced a tiger none can tame. Between the Turk and them there is deadly war ; and in the feud, he includes all who live with the Turk. The Arab, who murdered Captain Boutain, fled to the Ansayrii at Caldahha. They gave him protection. Dahher Pasha marched against them, and demanded him. They refused to give him up. The Pasha cut down all their trees, and laid waste the whole Mockatta : still they refused. He scattered them : still they refused. The Arab, meanwhile, robbed the sheik, under whose protection he was. The sheik said, "Take what you have stolen ; take this horse,—go : the road to Homs is open." He accordingly went.

my great friend, made a clean sweep of everything portable, and even walked off with the tame rabbits which occupied the garden. As yet, I will not pronounce sentence on the whole race, but have many examples to prove the bad in the character of the Arab ; this man, however, was a Levantine.

We left, positively not knowing whither we were bound. My horse took the way to the Nahr-el-Kebeer, or Great River, which we crossed above the bridge whose history I have given ; here night overtook us. In an hour we reached the small village of Hinadee, where the sheik and his people poured out to receive me. They set to work with kind alacrity ; horses were unladen, a spot cleared of weeds and stones, the tent pitched, and carpets spread in no time. As usual with the Sheik el Zollum (Sheik of Oppression, as the government sheiks are styled), the conversation was principally on the exactions of government, and this village, belonging to the Drousee, was also subject to the violence of the Classie. That very day, a mare had been carried off in broad daylight, and her owner beaten for remonstrating. The next morning visits poured in from the Sheik el Aalim, sheik of religion, and his brothers, but the servants

being near, no subject of interest was broached ; the sheik told me privately that the French were preparing for their assistance, and that they were then awaiting the order to declare for that nation. I said he had better not trust to such a rotten stick, and embroil himself or his people with the government, as, just now, the French had quite enough to do at home. He said, "It may not be to-day, nor to-morrow, but it will be. I tell you this, Ya beg, for you love us—is it true ?" He would not tell me the name of the agent ; but after a few questions, it was not hard to discover who this bungler was, nor to find out how much he had promulgated this doctrine among the people.* My little intercourse with this sect had prevented my ever hearing of this before.

The village of Hinadee is like the rest—wretched, dirty, and dirt-environed. Near it is a Tel, with marks of ruins, and below are the ruins of a fine bath. In the valley is said to be a large natural cave, but this I did not see, as no one could discover the entrance, for which we hunted

* He said, that the French troops were the first to occupy Jerusalem, and the other spots held holy by the Christians, and then spread over the rest of the country.

full an hour. The Tel, on which are the remains of buildings, as well as the village, is called Hinadee ; this, they say, is from Hindee, a daughter of Hind, who was queen of the place. She had three brothers, Hakmoon, Jemack, and Sion, who founded the castle of the name, where he resided. This village is one of the forty which belong to the government, and is dumas or let to an Aga at Latakia ; he has three men here to look after his interests. It happened that a good opportunity occurred of witnessing the mode of government : the chief of the three—a Turk, of course—was sitting by me, under some fig-trees, when a horseman arrived from his master, bearing an order for fifteen pounds of grease. “Hi Yellah !” he shouted to the sheik, who was there. The poor fellow rose, and repairing to the village, returned in about half an hour, saying it was ready. A man must carry it : the horseman could, but would not, so the Turk called a poor fellow who was ploughing near ; he remonstrated, urging the great loss a day would be to him. The Turk looked at me, but seeing I took no apparent notice, rose, and going to the man, struck him several severe blows ; the fellow, however, had

some stiff blood in him—he shouted to me for protection. I made him a sign, when he turned, and soon mastered his opponent, whom he handled pretty severely before I told him to desist. The others would have helped him, and the horseman rode at him. I said, “If you do, we will lick you all.” “You have no right to interfere; it is no business of yours.” “Well,” I replied, “and what right have you?” “Oh, we are the masters.” “The stronger, you mean.” “Yes.” “And by exactly that same right, if you move, I will beat you all; for here I am with five servants and people with me, so we have now the right.” The horseman rode off with the grease, while I wrote a complaint to the Governor of Latakia, of the Turk. He was very humble, but I feared for the poor fellow after I was gone.

In the afternoon, some young men from the mountains robbed a poor fellow working in the fields, and carried off a donkey-load of cucumbers. They beat the man, and stripped him of every shred he had on. This is one of the results of the government. These poor fellows belong to the government; if they complain, the counsel makes money of them; if the property is recovered,

which is a rare circumstance, the counsel takes it : if they resist, and kill or wound the aggressor, there is a blood-feud with a more powerful party : thus there is a premium to rob ; the great crime, and that which brings the heaviest punishment, is being honest. In the evening I left, and just before sunset, reached the village of El Alteree, where the tent was pitched at a saint's tomb, Sheik el Rarreeb, about a hundred yards beyond, near a large grove of figs and vines. The view of the mountains from thence was very fine ; a deep valley lay to the east, beyond which rose the varied range in glorious beauty.

Sheik Achmet, the sheik in charge of the tomb, whose family has held the trust for two hundred years, received me most kindly. I had known him before. The tomb has considerable property attached to it ; this the sheik farms, showing hospitality to all who come, who either make a present or not, as their means or taste dictates. An hour after my arrival, Abou Daoud, the brother of Shemseen Sultan, the most powerful temporal chief of the Ansayrii, came to me, with donkeys laden with edibles of all sorts : he has a property near, at which he happened to be. Lambs were

slaughtered, my stores poured out, the music sent for, and the villagers feasted and danced till past midnight. No Christians except myself being present, rakkee was freely drunk ; wine flowed like water ; the sheiks of religion remained apart with me, rather condemning the proceedings. At last, a furious rush was made to the place where I sat ; my knees, my feet were kissed, and finally my shoes torn off, and carried off in triumph by the maniacs. The scene was one of wild and savage interest : a large fire of brushwood had been kindled in an open space without the village, which was constantly replenished with fresh fuel ; round this, in a large circle, wild and half mad with liquor, danced the men, yelling forth a wild and not unmusical sort of slogan, now and then firing their pistols or guns, or brandishing their long, savage khandjars ; within, with quiet step and steady simultaneous motion, danced the women. The music swelled or lulled, the fire rose and fell, lighting up the moving figures, the gleaming arms ; over all, the quiet moon and deep-set stars, the matchless serenity of the air, contrasted strangely with the noise and din below. It was astonishing that nobody was shot, more especially that I

escaped ; fellows rushed up, presented a long gun or pistol bang at one's head, within a yard's distance, and two or three times I fancied myself shot ; at others, the heavy blow of the khandjar swept by my very ear.

Stealing off in a moment when attention was directed elsewhere, I regained my tent, and my last consciousness was of unabated noise, firing and drumming. Long before my sleep was over, the visitors of last night, as well as many others, were sitting outside the tent, waiting to welcome me. A sash or two, and some tarboushes contented their utmost desires, for to be clothed by a great man is the greatest honour possible to be conferred. Invitations poured in : here was a village which belonged to me, awaiting my arrival with impatience. "Ya Beg, we are your slaves, your servants ; live among us, make our crops grow. Ali, Ali, stay with us." During the whole day, successions of visitors arrived, as I sat under the fig-tree, and few came empty-handed. My glory was, however, cut short by the fever, which laid me low ; the two following days were harassed by illness, and varied by more visits, and on the morning of the third I left for Gebaile. A poor

girl had been given me ; being rather at a loss how to dispose of such a present, I gave her to the Mazar. This is a common custom among fathers ; they dedicate, before or after birth, their children to particular saints ; these, when of an age are made to labour for the saint, either on the property pertaining to his tomb or in some other way, for the benefit of the deceased. Girls thus vowed have a hard life of it, and it is a controverted question whether they may marry or not ; but if they do, they must remain on the spot and labour. Vanity led me to fancy that the very pretty, modest-looking maid, was not altogether pleased with my disposal of her, and not even my gold watch-chain could appease her wrath at what she considered the *spretæ injuria formæ*.

As the town was plainly visible, I forsook the road, and took a straight cut across country ; passed two tels, around the bases of which were large remnants of buildings, remains of walls cemented together, stones quarried, &c. Arrived at Gebaile, I passed the morning taking quinine and making resolves, the bitterness of the one strengthening the other, to quit the country and seek a feverless climate. Those who have travelled in

the East can alone appreciate the feeling of the unfortunate traveller, sitting with the bitter cup before him and watch in hand waiting for the hour;—it comes, the hand passes on, by Jove, it is over;—but now a sudden blueness comes over the nails, a chill creeps over him, he fancies that the day is cool. No, the sun shines like a furnace; the cold creeps on; shiver, shiver, till the whole body works, and he smothers himself beneath a pile of clothes, wondering why fevers come, or why he is such a fool as to go and meet them.

Various incidents detained me at Gebaile; the Ansayrii stole a horse, a loss I was by no means prepared to endure, and as the Moutselim had no force to retake him, I was forced to go myself. He was detained at Zama, where the people received me kindly, and at once offered to return him: as he was in the village this seemed a work of no difficulty; but they wished to do me honour, they said, and would send him after me. I accordingly left the village in company with some ten or twelve of the villagers; getting outside they prepared to bid me good-bye. “But the horse?”—“Ya Bey, on our heads be it, we will send him.” I returned and waited two days, but

no horse came ; on the third I rode back and met the people, who said the horse had been stolen from them, but they were willing to assist in recovering him. Upon this I quietly mounted, the people standing by me ; many had their arms, so a dash was necessary. “ You have promised to assist me, now let me go, this is the assistance I want ;” and I seized the man nearest me by his beard, spurred my horse and galloped off. The poor fellow must have suffered exquisite pain ; but I held him like a vice, he vainly endeavouring to keep up. Why the people did not fire I cannot imagine, perhaps for fear of killing him. When at a respectable distance I halted and held a parley with them, saying, the moment the horse was delivered I would give him up ; if this were not done, he should be shot. They protested very vehemently that the horse was not there ; they would try and collect money to pay me for it, &c. ; but I turned and continued my route. Finally the horse was brought, and one man gave me his halter ; letting go my prisoner I cantered home. On the first seizure of the man I had told the one servant that was with me to gallop a little way on and wait, he however never drew rein till

he reached Gebaile, where, when I arrived, he was relating my death and his own feats with an admiring audience around. My presence, poor fellow, was rather unwelcome, for the people were full of his courage. "Mashallah-Sharter-Ajaibee," was sounded by the gaping listeners; his pistols produced made them wonder. I, however, lost my dinner, as Abdallah, believing the report, had abstractedly consumed it, and I pounced upon him murmuring my praises as he picked a bone.

The cave is shown at Gebaile where the Sultan Ibrahim passed his life in prayer. It is a rudely excavated tomb, nor could I find any sign of a keblah or prayer-point. It is in the cliff to the north of the mina, on the sea-shore. While sitting there he dropped his needle into the water; as it was the only one he possessed, and his clothes greatly needed mending, it was necessary to recover it. So the saint called a fish to bring it, which ever afterwards retained, on either side, the marks of his holy fingers. We here find a robbery of our Christian legend of the Apostle and the fish. In the mina, a few yards from the beach, is the tomb of Abdallah el Morovree, or Abdallah the Conqueror, Captain Pasha to Melek el Daher.

The town walls, which seem entirely modern, do not extend to the beach, but surround the town, the seaward wall being some eighty yards from the shore. The population is 2400 or 2600 souls, of which only two families are Christians, and they not of the place, but sojourners here for purposes of trade. The town has five gates, the north, or principal, is called the Bab el Sultan Ibrahim; the south, Bebel Kubleé, or Southern-gate; two more open on the sea-side; one a mere low hole. These are all closed at night, though the wall would not impede anybody who wished to get over, being in places not more than five feet high.

In the mina, some thirty yards from the sea, the traveller will find a fig-tree; beneath it is the Martickly, a narrow, ruinous flight of steps, conducting to a dark passage, small, and now half full of rubbish and loose stone. Here, they say, that in former days of persecution, the Christians came to pray; but if the town was then as it is now, I should doubt the story, because a more public spot could not have been chosen. The place still enjoys considerable sanctity, and Christian and Moslem often repair here in cases of sickness. The gardens around Gebaile are rich,

and produce a good supply of fruits and vegetables. These are now often the prey of the Ansayrii, who plunder up to the walls of the town. During my stay of ten days they twice carried off several donkey loads of vegetables and fruit, nor did the inhabitants, and there are no soldiers there, venture to hinder them. The town has a Moutselim and council under the kaimakan of Latakia. Walking home, I met one of the sheiks or guardians of the mosque : finding my compass, whose south point they would insist ought to point to Mecca, did not agree with theirs, the whole town was thrown into commotion, and two parties formed, the one in favour of their own, the other of my points.

The mosque has one Moutselim or steward ; he had the management of the Wakf, or holy property ; one Moollah, or Doctor of Doctrine and Law ; and three sheiks. These last sleep in the mosque. They say the Sultan's mother followed him with an army, and reaching Latakia, pitched her camp without the town, sending in criers to hear if her son was there. He, knowing of her coming, hid himself ; however, his mother persuaded him to grant her an interview. So the Sultan, dressed in his dervish's clothes, went out to meet the people

who had come in search of him. His mother commenced by saying, "Where are the wives that rested on your breasts? where the mother who loves you?" "Here," replied the pious saint, clasping the Koran to his heart, "here are wives, brothers, subjects, slaves, servants, friends," and, pointing upwards, "there my kingdom!" So saying he took his way back to his solitary cave. He reigned, they say, over, seven countries; Korassan, Bockhara, Caubul, Candahar, Irak, and Herat. The Sultan subsequently went to Mecca, and while there, saw a young man; his heart yearned within him, and at last he fell on his neck and blessed him. The young man, within whose breast there was the same feeling, warmly returned his embrace. After a time they discovered by mutual questions, that this was the long searched-for father, and that his darling son. Struck by his father's example, he threw aside his gold embroidered dresses, and after many years spent in prayer at Mecca, died there in the odour of sanctity. The Sultan returned to Gebaile, and dying, the pious faithful built the mosque over him.

One of the sheiks told me, that his father, for seventy-five years never slept out of the mosque,

and during that period the Sultan frequently honoured him with interviews. Their conversation on these occasions was principally on money matters. The Sultan, who was a short, stout man, with a grey beard, dressed in an old aba, complained of the way they stinted him ; of windows broken and not repaired ; then of the pay of the sheiks, which he ordered to be doubled ; and, finally, when one of the minarets of the mosque fell, he said if another were not built he should not appear again. The minaret has not been rebuilt, and they say he has never appeared since. The mosque has a fine bath attached to it, where any one may bathe ; a present is expected from those who can afford it. The mosque has seven muezzins. Each calls the prayers for a week, and in the interval follows any business he has ; for this they receive seventy-five piastres every three months. Soup and bread are distributed gratis every day to the poor from the mosque ; the soup is good. Many dervishes reside at the mosque, as they find the quarters comfortable. I examined the candlestick and other ornaments in the mosques, but could not find any proof that they were Cypress, or even that they were Christian. The sheiks said

that there had been formerly some taken from Christians, but they were gone. One incense pot was shown me of very fine Persian inlaid work.

To the south of the town, amidst the gardens, is an old mosque: they say, long years ago, a pious dervish arrived at the town one winter's eve; having no place of rest he went to the house of an Aga, where he craved hospitality; this the Aga refused, and though the evening was far advanced, he drove him from his door. The poor man retired to the fields, and sat down on the spot where the mosque now stands; here he repeated the creed, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet." The Prophet heard the cry of the faithful and appeared before him, begging to know what he wanted. The dervish replied, "For myself, nothing; for my master, a house." Spite of the place he then sank into a sound sleep, and on awaking in the morning, found himself in a fine mosque, wherein, henceforth, he took up his residence.

Leaving Gebaile, I reached Borgé el Sabbée in the evening, where the tent was pitched. The Borgé stands on a height some three hundred yards from the sea, built of black stone. It is little injured, save a breach on the sea-face, apparently the

work of cannon. From it run the remains of a wall which can be traced to the sea. Here, tradition says, was a gate, always kept shut and guarded. Immediately south of it is the Minat el Boss, now a shallow port. South of this, again, is a huge vaulted room, or store, the only portion remaining of a building; and this, again, closed in the south portion of the harbour, having a wall, gate, &c.

A subterraneous passage is said to communicate with the south-east bastion of Merkab. Merkab is two miles inland,—a rough country, planted and wild, intervening. There are several remains of buildings about, which probably, once joined the mina to the castle. In a field may be seen a huge reservoir of water. Merkab is said by the natives to have been wrested from the hands of the Franks by Said, a general of Kelaoun's, Sultan of Damascus. There is likewise a story that the mortar was mixed with oil instead of water, and that the huge tank to be seen near the walls, was full of it. They allude to an inscription, which says, "We, 150,000 men, well paid, well treated, worked at this. Every stone was cut and brought, every stone was set with oil,—oil, one para the bottle."

Up a small gully are numerous tombs cut in the rock, besides hermits' cells, with which it is honey-combed. There is one tomb larger than the rest ; this the Christians have dedicated to the Virgin, and yearly a large feast is held there. One of the cells is venerated as the residence of St. Michael during many years, and the whole of the small gorge is said in former times to have been the abode of hermits. The Turks say that in former times men made these places to reside in during the *Reiha Salza*, which they describe as a wind or hurricane, which nothing could withstand.*

Passed the day at one of the pretty villages scattered over the uneven ground between *Merkab* and the sea. In the evening reached *Deir Sufran* (the yellow village), which I have been at before. The whole population were in their gardens. While remaining here, my servant got himself engaged to a pretty, modest-looking maid of the

* I have made many inquiries as to this, and can find out only what appears far-fetched. If the reader will look in the *Koran*, chap. xi., *Sourat el Hudd*, he will see as follows :—" But a terrible noise from heaven assailed those who had acted unjustly ; and in the morning they were found in their houses lying dead and prostrate, as though they had never dwelt therein." The same words are also repeated further on. From this, they say, comes the legend, that, with the idea of escaping this noise or mighty wind or weather, they excavated the rocks as habitations.

village. He bothered me for my advice, which I gave him decidedly anti-matrimonial, referring him to the Ansayrii creed, which concurs with my own on this point : but he, or rather his mother, was resolved ; so one evening I headed a large procession, firing, yelling, and proceeded to the bride's father's house. Here the father met us, and welcomed us with all form. He sat on my left, while the bridegroom's party sat on my right. The latter then begged me to ask for the daughter for their son. The man replied, " They are your slaves ; do with them what you like." The bridegroom's party then gave several handkerchiefs and some money to the bride, as a pledge. Then followed eatables, arrack, wine, firing again, and all was over. Soon after, I rode on to Tartosa, on the south-eastward. Within the walls are the remains of an enormous building, and the sea-walls contain vaults of great size. On the outward gate is an inscription. On the exterior walls of the church, within the town, I could only find a rude chalice carved.

The present town comprises the antient citadel or castle. A deep ditch, revêted with stone, defends the inland side, beyond which stretches the town, of which the two gates and remnants of the

wall alone remain. The wall on the sea face is tolerably perfect, casemated, with vaulted chambers within.

My tent was pitched near the church. It is about one hundred yards east of the town, and very beautiful ; a small expense would put it into repair. I copied the inscriptions over the place where the pulpit formerly stood. There seems a doubt among the sheiks whom I questioned, whether it was ever used as a mosque or not. Except the inscriptions I give, there were no others. “*La illah illah Allah,*” (there is no God but God,) was rudely scratched on a stone. No traveller has conjectured to whom the church was dedicated ; but the Lady of Tartosa was a famed pilgrimage during the Crusades. Riding half-an-hour southward, I embarked for the island of Ruad.

The boats running between Ruad and Tartosa do not land at Tartosa, where there is nothing but an open beach, but either at a place called the Mina, some half-hour to the northward, or at the mouth of a river,—the Rumkah—a small stream, probably the Ximyra of Strabo. I found, however, no remains about it. A boat was waiting, which, as the wind was contrary, pulled over to

the island,—a low mass of buildings. The Moutselim, who had been written to, had provided me an excellent house on the western side. A fresh breeze blew through it, and my windows overlooked the sea. Here I was soon most comfortably installed, and spent nearly a month. I became acquainted with several most intelligent Mussulmans. As I practised medicine, and, luckily, with considerable success, my popularity was very great, though, generally, the people are accused of fanaticism. An Italian was the only Frank there. He had been seven months on the island, during the whole of which time he had remained shut up in his room, and by this conduct had excited the curiosity of all its inhabitants.

The island is oblong, with a small rise in the centre, on which is built the castle. The whole of it is rock ; soil, however, has been brought from the main, to make gardens in the courts of the houses, and a few grapes and flowers are produced in them. The whole island, except close to the sea, is covered with houses. The inhabitants, who number about three thousand, of whom perhaps one hundred may be Christians, are seamen employed in the coasting trade ; for Ruad possesses

three hundred boats of various sizes, from a mere boat up to vessels of forty or fifty tons. These are built on the island, of wood principally brought from Djebel Okral, Mount Cassius, or above Tarsus from Giaour Dagħ,—the Amanus. The Christians are generally masons, and come from the main,—none being natives of the island.

Many of the houses are comfortable, but none large or fine, and none of any antiquity. Beneath them are generally excavations, apparently ancient store-places. They are of the shape of a beehive, with an opening at the top. The inhabitants are fine lusty fellows, and rather independent, possessing several immunities. They only pay the miri, and the conscription has never been taken from them. The water is supplied from reservoirs, though the more wealthy procure it daily from the main in jars. That in the reservoirs being rain-water, is soft, and not agreeable to drink. The people have no tradition of the islands being supplied formerly from a marine spring, but they know of springs of fresh water, and I visited them, in the sea, half way between the main and Tartosa. In a line from one to the other, I found two springs excessively cold, the water at the surface brackish.

The natives said there were four, but I could only find two. They dived for me at the spot, bringing up white round pebbles. Diving myself, the water seemed to spring from a sandy spot. The springs were not in a line, thus disproving that they are holes in a former aqueduct between the island and the main, as a Frenchman, who had preceded me, had told the natives.

The island depends entirely on the main for its supplies, which are brought daily ; consequently, in bad weather they are much straitened. During the late war with Ibrahim Pasha, the island declared for the Sultan, on which Ibrahim ordered that any of the people who were caught on the main should lose their heads. The arrival of British men-of-war saved them from starvation, certainly from ruin, for provisions had risen to a great price. The island appears to have been formerly surrounded by a wall, portions of which still remain on the north-eastern and south-eastern parts of the island, composed of blocks of stones, many fifteen feet in length. In some places the walls were double. From the remains, they seem to have been of a great height, as in places their ruins are thirty feet high ; and yet the upper

courses are wanting ; in thickness, they are about nine feet. The wall in parts approaches close to the sea,—the solid rock where it serves being cut for it ; in others, an artificial foundation has been made. Within the walls are remains of troughs, as if to carry off any water that might drain through. The island is thus surrounded with its wall, except on the eastern side ; and being in the form of a crescent, the eastern side forms a cove protected by the projecting north and south walls. In this cove, the water is deep in parts, admitting vessels of forty or eighty tons ; in the centre, the remains of a long jetty run straight out, formed of huge blocks of stone laid one on another. This cove is open, but the proximity of the main forms sufficient protection. A cove runs up within the wall on the north, where the boats were hauled up on the ledge of flat rock between the wall and the houses. On the north-eastward, are ways, as if for hauling up boats. Between the wall, all round except the east side, and the higher level on which the houses are built, is a flat floor of rock, often artificial ; in some places the rock being cut down to a level, in others filled up with a pavement of small stones and cement. This has in many

places outlasted the solid rock, though exposed to the same influences. Thus, an open space of some fifty to a hundred feet deep, exists between the sea and the foot of the rock. In these rocks, houses, rooms, and stores are cut, forming a regular series of caves of great extent. These, the tradition of the natives say, were for habitations during the Reihā Saltza, which I have mentioned before. They say it was a hurricane which, blowing from the S.S.E., lasted three or nine days, tearing up trees, and sweeping away houses in its irresistible course. The level rock is marked with cuts and holes, as if for buildings, and square pavements with ledges, evidently the remains of houses. On the south-east, a great number of these still exist. On the east, between the two walls, are several granite columns, thrown down, and the platform of a temple may still be traced.

Among the rocks near is a figure with closed wings ; it is of marble finely cut ; and the head, I was told, had but recently been carried off. On a species of raised platform, on the south-east, are the holes where some more columns stood, which now lie about. I found on the island several small marble shafts, mythra, and remains of some ill-

worked sarcophagi. The island has seven forts of various sizes ; two only are ancient, they having been repaired ; and the rest built by Mahmoud's orders during the Greek war, as a force from that power visited the island and made a compulsory contribution. On the south is a large burial-ground, the soil of which is loose stones and sand : this is covered with shrubs planted by the pious mourners. The people have no tradition of the Serpent's Rock, or of Andromeda.

They say, in former ages, (*Djahiliyyah*, or "the time of ignorance before Mahomet,") a king's daughter was afflicted with an incurable and contagious malady, so the king sent her here, where she was cured, and out of gratitude established a colony, and beautified the island with many buildings, palaces, &c. We must leave to antiquarians to trace in this the legend ; and, perhaps, a connection may be discovered which will supersede the story of the wicked captain who attempted to carry off this Bint el Melek-Andromeda.

The best informed of the natives say, that formerly Fariss (knights,) probably the Knights of Malta, used to land on the island, and from thence pillage the surrounding country : that about

400* years ago, Ibrahim Pasha Kobourbe Zardu (Soudere Arzane,)+ going from Stamboul to Egypt, heard this, and procured an order from the Sultan to build a fort and place a garrison there. He built the fort, and garrisoned it with 130 men under a chosen leader. The descendants of these form the present inhabitants ; for before, the terror of the galleys had driven all the former inhabitants away, and not a soul nor a house was left. It was at Ruad probably, the last remnant of the Crusaders met, when, flying from their Moslem foes, they sought a home in distant Christian lands.

Having (Mashallah) cured a Mussulman's wife of a long-continued intermittent fever, her husband and myself became great friends, and from him I received much interesting information : he was an *ian*, or head-man. He told me how Ibrahim Pasha had carried off all the brass guns of the fort, &c. Among other things, he told me that there is an account among them of the peopling of Malta. I cannot forgive myself for not asking the name of the book ; he said, that at the capture of

* Constantinople was only taken 1453, A.D. ; not 400 years ago.

† The chest (waistcoat) literally ; as the Sultan is the head, the next man is the chest ; or, the waistcoat that protects his breast.

Tripoli, A.D. 1289, there were a great number of *Moutenaseras* there—Mussulmans converted to Christianity : it means relapsed, re-converted, so it implies they had been Christians who had embraced the true faith, and then relapsed ; these, fearing the Moslem, knowing for them there was no mercy, fled to Malta. The legend, at least, is curious. Speaking of Grenada, he said, that Syria, and in fact Arabia, owed all the arts they knew to these people, who, driven from Spain, dispersed over their country, carrying with them their arts among a people who before were barbarously ignorant. Thus the Lord, while chastening Islam, confers on her incalculable blessings.—Islam is his own.

There is a species of agent at Ruad, who represents all the powers ; he has a fine collection of coins and antiques, most of them picked up on the island. They might tend to throw much light on the history of the island. He was ill during my stay, so I was unable to see them ; but from his bed he wrote me the following letter :—

“ *Mr. Agi, prai qui giye mi an laksill Inglice de Arabbik mister do me chis favor. ABCELBAKY.*”*

* His servant subsequently explained, he wanted me to lend him an Arabic and English Dictionary.

The boys of Ruad pass their existence almost in the water, and use a surf-board very similar to that of the Sandwich Islands, except that here they sit and lean on it, while the Kanaka stands. My windows, overlooking the western sea, were enlivened with their cries.

“ Bahharr el kebir Allah y jibble,
Bakharr el yereer na meeredom.”

“ A heavy sea God give us,
A calm sea we do not want,”

seemed the burden of their song.

In the afternoon came troops of maids and matrons, but then, of course, my shutters were shut, and peeping even forbidden. A true believer would scorn to commit such a breach of decorum. *Ouse Billah min Shitan rejime.**

The children also had a song, which as characteristic of the Moslem I cannot help giving ; it expresses exactly the creed of the Turk, who, whatever they may say, are Turk always, and as such hate all others. The more they see of European superiority, the more they hate the Frank, and probably the moments of their greatest

* A Christian would probably have said, *Asfar el Jinni zazar*.

protestations of friendship are those when their heart most hates and despises. I give this, because I never heard it before, and, perhaps, it may be as new to others as it was to me—

“ Allah insurr el Sultan ou Ooscar el Islam,
 Siepho Hodamo beor duckanor
 Ou Allah ye harra el Kaffir (Kaffar) (Kaffour).”*

I was struck also with the fear the children entertained of foreigners. A Frank vessel put into the cove. “ *Emmee, emmee*—mother, mother,—hide me, hide, the Franks (the *Kaffour*) have come to carry me off.” Might we not fairly trace in this the remembrance of that day, handed down through sire and son, when the war-galleys of the soldier-monks ran suddenly in and bore off the finest of the youth to work the oar, or adorn the harem.†

* “ God prosper the Sultan and the soldiers of Islam.
 May the bright sword flash before them,—killing their foes.
 Oh, God, confound the Infidel !”

† My researches into the annals of the warrior monks, and visits to their castles, hospices, &c. has much lessened my belief in the weight they attached to their vows; and I say now, with Villani, speaking of their fall: “ Questo pericolo non fu senza grande e giusto giudicio di Dio che quella citta era piena di piu peccatori huomini e femmine d’ ogni dissoluto peccato che terra che fasse tra’ Cristiani.” He says this with regard to the whole population at the end of the Crusades.

CHAPTER XVII.

My Singular Fortune in my Travels—Arab-Irish Phraseology—I Practise Surgery—My great Success—Melancholy Reflections—The Parable of the Olive Plantation—Snake-Charmers—Description of the Sponge Boats—Profits of Sponge—Diving—Antiquities of Tartousa—Temple of the Sun—Sepulchral Excavations—Tel Akka—Sudden Death of Animals in the East—Eastern Guide-Books—Kontaret el Brins—Roguery of the Padre—Rough treatment of the Missionaries—Their Ideas of Protestantism—A Mussulman and Christian Jury—The Convent of Lazaris—The Frank Padres of Kanobin—Grandeur of Eastern Scenery—The Cedars of Lebanon—The Ranges of Lebanon—Vitality of the Cedar Tree—Figurative use of the Cedar in Prophecy—Supply the Moslem Fleet—Opinions of Decandolle—The Cedars Mutilated by Travellers—Peculiar Region of their Growth.

A SINGULAR fortune attends my Eastern travels. Fate is tired of persecuting one who submits with philosophic resignation to what she sends—who endeavours, on all occasions, to exclaim, in the words of Marcus Antoninus, “Whatever is agreeable to thee, shall be agreeable to me. O graceful universe! Nothing shall be to me too early or too late which is seasonable to thee. Whatever thy season bears shall be joyful fruit to me. O Nature! from thee are all things; in thee they subsist, to thee they return.” In her kindest mood she deigns to regard me: would that she

would reserve her benefits and her smiles for more fitting opportunity !

Some ten days ago, a sponge-boat put into the coast, and one of her crew, a Christian, took a stone from a field near where she lay, and was carrying it into the boat, when another Christian, of Tartosa, who was by, and from whose property the stone had been taken, told the man he would not let him have it. The dispute grew warm, and at last they came to blows : the boatman ran to his boat, and, bringing from thence a huge stick, struck the other man on the head. The fellow fell into the shallow water, and there remained, apparently dead. The boatman plunged into the sea, and swam to a boat then passing by, but was given up and lodged in prison. The wounded man was picked up and carried to his house. Five days afterwards I arrived at Tartosa, and was told the story, and that the man still breathed but was dead. The Arabs use this word much as the Irish do : dead does not mean “lifeless,” “gone,” but merely expresses an extreme ; and they add, “dead, dead,” when they wish to say he is really defunct ; also, when a blow is given, they always say, “so and so is broken.” “He broke my arm,”

means, "He hit me over the arm." On one of the bystanders saying, "perhaps the Beg would see him," an Aga, who was sitting with me, said, "Why trouble the Beg? it is of no use."

In sauntering about the town, however, I happened to pass the door, and several Christians entreated me to come and see the wounded man. Accordingly I was shown to a dark, close room, where at least twenty persons were crowded round a mass of clothes and mattresses. Beneath this heap lay the poor man: they, too, readily made way for me, and I threw back the clothes, from whence came a heat and smell insufferable. Now, whatever skill a daring experimental practice of medicine had given me, a knowledge of surgery was not included in it; and a great horror of blood—a shrinking from seeing pain—had always kept me from looking at any operations, however trivial; so I was, perhaps, less able than most men to do any good for the poor creature before me. There he lay, breathing heavily, with his eyes wide open; but he had neither spoken, nor shown signs of consciousness, since the accident. As I threw off the coverings, the people exclaimed, "If he feels the air he will

die—light will kill him—he has eaten nothing; we made this for him,” showing me a basin of stuff which even I would have starved rather than have touched. “You say he will die?” I asked. They all exclaimed, “Yes.” “Well, if he does, he will die of you, not of the blow.” At last I had him carried to an upper room, laid on a dry, clean mattress, all his clothes taken off, and his body well sponged; opened doors and windows, and then sat down beside him. His head, where the wound was, they represented as quite smashed, and they all insisted that exposure to the air would kill him. I dared not undo it, as, if he should die, I should be accused of his murder, and probably have to pay some dreadful sum for my first practice in surgery. Then I argued, if this were true, why did he not die when the wound was first inflicted, and his head left bare: so the first handkerchief came off: and then, though very much afraid, I undid the others, till the head was bare; there was a mass of blood, but the man appeared so well, although in a state of insensibility, that I could not fancy there was any mortal injury. The remedies I applied were these: a cold cloth was kept to his head, changed,

and wetted every ten minutes : some soup from my table was sent, and I made him eat it by pouring it down his throat ; and, after the soup, some wine and water. The next morning I left for Ruad.

To-day, Sunday, I was sitting alone, full of my own thoughts—and sad, sad they were—when I heard a noise at the door. At first, ill-humour prompted me to close it against the visitor, but the servant opened it, and there entered the venerable Greek priest, followed by men, women, children filling up the gap below, till the little hole was full, save the respectful space left round me. The priest stroked his beard, and thus he spoke :

“Ya Bey, God has indeed given all knowledge to the Franks. You came, you saw our dead brother, and behold he speaks and walks. We are your slaves ; our sons, our daughters, are your servants—your slaves. We pray you accept our offering : would it were thousands ! Would our lives please you, they are yours.” Hereupon, kids, cucumbers, vegetables, unripe fruit, wine, and other things, were poured out before me. In vain I pleaded that it was God’s work, and I, a poor ignorant vagrant : they left me fully persuaded

that my touch was health, and my power almost infinite.

“ There is a temple in ruin stands,
 Fashioned by long forgotten hands ;
 One or two columns, and many a stone,
 Marble or granite, with moss overgrown.
 Out upon time,—it will leave no more
 Of the things to come than the things before.
 Out upon time,—who for ever will leave
 But enough of the past for the future to grieve
 O’er that which hath been, o’er that which must be :
 What we have seen, our sons shall see.
 Remnants of things that have passed away ;
 Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay.”

I was sitting on the ruined wall vainly striving to trace the ground-plan of the temple* beneath me ; a foot of water covered the despoiled spot, but so clear, that its presence was doubtful until a circle made by a fly disturbed its surface. The black humour was on me. I thought, “ Fool, this night thy soul will be required of thee !” Why had the former race expended such immense labour?—a few years and they were gone.† Here stood their temple ; we wonder whom they worshipped, how they prayed ; these steps, whither do they lead ?‡

* What was this temple? “ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad ?”—Isaiah, xxxvi. 19.

† How little we know of the strong men who built these giant walls. “ Where is the king of Hamath and the king of Arphad.”—Isaiah, xxxvii. 13. Echo answers—where?

‡ So all this vast toil, all this great labour, all this great building for everlasting,—of what avail? Arphad is confounded ; its lofty house, and stately halls, and the high places : and a few boatmen but pass an existence over their ruins.

This niche, a week's labour, what for? — Their name, their race, their fame, their sins were forgotten. Why, when such is the life of man—such is fate, and such we know must be ours—do we not fold our arms and wait, wishing only that our lot may be quickly decided, our annihilation sudden? My Turkish sheik stood by me, and I told him my thoughts. He said :

“ Ya Beg, the great Abdel-Keder, Beg el Hadjed, was riding out and he saw an old man planting olive-trees. Hailing him with courteous salutation, he said, ‘ My father, how old are you ? ’ ‘ Ninety, Ya Beg. ’ ‘ And planting olives ? do you expect to sit under their shade, or to sell the crops ? How much shall you net next year ? ’ ‘ Ya Beg, I am old ; when I was young, my father died : he left me no money, but he left me a plantation of olives which he had planted the year before he died. On these I have subsisted all my life, and now I am doing for the next generation as was done for me. ’ The Beg gave the old man his purse. ‘ Ya Beg, ’ replied the old man, ‘ my olives have produced their first crop, I have netted a purse of gold. ’ The Beg gave him his seal, worth three times the purse. ‘ My life will be short, ’

replied the old man, 'but God brings summer quickly round, my second harvest is gathered, the crop three times as good as the first.' 'Yes, Ya Beg,' my friend added, 'we ought all to plant olives, or do good works.' "

The people of Ruad are firm believers in snake-charmers. They say the family of Sheik Said Ibn el Raphee, or Phace, have the power as an hereditary gift, but that it may be obtained by drinking a charm given you by one who has the gift ; the charm is simply oil and water, made potent by a prayer breathed over it by the holy man. Women place snakes round their waists in order to have children : they only, however, do so when prescriptions, pilgrimages, &c., have failed. I was shown a small boy some seven years old, who had the gift. He was one of the family, and his father, Sheik Ali, was a noted snake-charmer. Numerous stories were told me of the boy ; but we could not find a snake for him to practise on. As I never, therefore, saw what he could do, I forbear to pronounce an opinion upon it ; but everybody spoke of his wonderful powers. They also had a phenomenon in a girl who had the power, such being quite

out of the regular course, and never having occurred before.

There are no dogs at Ruad; cats constitute their only domestic animals. They keep a few fowls and pigeons, and also sheep. A Ruad sheep would live anywhere; they scrape up vegetable peelings, and eat the species of seed-grass found on the beach: their owners are forced, however, to feed them with corn, &c. These sheep are generally kept for Ramazan, when they are sacrificed.

Having enjoyed my sojourn very much, I left; again visited the springs of fresh-water; dived, and brought up a sponge from the spring; and then I was landed at the Mina, an artificial port now in ruins, a mile, or rather less, north of Tartosa. About fifty sponge boats were lying in the harbour of Ruad when I left; these are small boats rigged like a one-masted vessel, having a square topsail and top-gallant sail on their one mast, with broom mainsail, foresail, jib and flying jib; a pretty good press of sail for such small cockle-shells.

The crew consists of eight or ten Greeks, for the divers are universally of that nation. They come south, and dive for sponges along the coast during the summer months. Ruad used to be famous for

its sponge banks, but they have been overdrawn. All the crew share according to their rank or capabilities, so all are alike interested in the success of the cruize. The men dive from the water ; on reaching the bottom, the diver commences plucking the sponges which adhere to the rocks and stones. Having secured as many as he can in his breast, he checks a rope fastened to him, and is pulled up. They dive deep, but have not the power of remaining under water so long as the Ceylon pearl divers, or the Polynesian Islanders. During the two days I passed with a boat, no man remained under water more than twenty-seven seconds. Their gains are most uncertain, sometimes a hundred piastres a man ; sometime not one. They share according to the result of each man's fishing, so a lazy fellow who will not dive, gets but little ; they are fine muscular men, but suffer a good deal from ill health. In answer to my queries of how many years they lasted, they said most of them gave it up after a year ; meaning the weak were soon weeded off, only the strong being able to continue in the trade.

The Mina or port was formed by a reef running out into the sea, and then taking a parallel turn

to the beach, forming a secure cove ; a reef on the north formed the remaining side, leaving an opening sufficient for boats and coasters. On the reef are the remains of a large, vaulted building, and great numbers of granite shafts of columns, &c. On the shore are a modern khan and some hovels, also a manufactory of water-jars.

Mounting, I skirted Tartosa, visiting the numerous tombs cut in the rocks ; on the south, excavations have been begun in a large ancient cemetery. Bronzes and numerous glass vessels are found ; the statuettes are generally of Venus ; but none that I saw were finely made. Bosses of shields, buttons, lamps, tea-cups of fine glass, &c., were found in all ; in many of the tombs a few stones rudely cut, had been built over the body ; in others there were coarse pottery sarcophagi rudely carved. Two hours brought me to a place called Marbit. This is what the learned Pococke describes as one of the most extraordinary pieces of antiquity. An open space of fifty yards square is cleared among the rocks ; the rocks around, of perhaps ten feet high, are cut for walls. On the north, it is open ; in the centre stands a throne composed of four large stones, two at the sides,

one at the back, and one on the top as a canopy ; the whole, some sixteen feet high, and twelve broad, within the stones, leave a groove between them ; but there are no notches or grooves to show that anything has been removed. An ornamental cornice surrounds the canopy ; no legend with regard to the place, exists among the people—its name is Marbit.

This would seem to be the site of Marathus, the rocks around which rise in blocks above the ground, with stump wood, and between them bear extensive marks of quarrying, and in many places seem to have been cut to form portions of buildings. Here is the wood Pococke mentions, which now forms one of the favourite spots for the Ansayrii, who lie in wait for travellers, and under its shelter can retire unnoticed to their villages in the mountains. The temple, being open, would probably be one dedicated to the sun,* which was always open ; the rocks exhibit semi-circles with seats open to the east : half an hour south is Margaville, as the Ansayrii call it. These are evidently sepulchral towers, and many of them

* *Sol* and *Adonis* were the same among the Syrians. May we not trace from this the extended *Mithras*, so prevalent apparently in Syria. *Homs*, *Nahr Ibrahim*, *Gabele*, &c., *Afka Leeman*, were all, perhaps, the same.

are scattered over the space ; some are plain, others ornamented with four-footed beasts at the corners ; the ground about, broken rock, is literally mined with tombs, some larger, some smaller, containing cells for corpses ; south of these is an oblong building with sarcophagi ; all have, however, been opened, and their contents rifled.

I visited several of the sepulchral excavations, and found nothing but thousands of bats, which clung to me, much to my annoyance, and not a little to my fear. Even the towers, which are built of large stones, have been broken into ; but they seem solid, and were probably cenotaphs rather than actual depositories of the bodies themselves. My servants offered great remonstrances to my encamping at this wild place, particularly as I was unknown. A sheik of the Ansayrii, however, joined me, and several others soon gathered about us. The centre of Ruad bore, N. 21, 30 W. They said they had heard of the English Salleem * who was of their faith ; and after a discussion on religion, we became great friends, and they remained with me all night as a guard.

On the following morning, early, I pursued my

* Learned one.

road. The mountains here fall back, leaving a broad plain, which, except a few small hills, stretches to the east, joining the plain of Homs and Damascus. On this plain are large encampments of Arabs of the Jahesh tribe : they told me they had migrated, some seven years back, from the more eastern plain, and now remained here winter and summer. As it was Ramazan, we had to trust to our own resources for food. In the evening, passed on to a large Christian village on the River Akkar, Ruhanee. Leaving the baggage, visited Kalaat el Ard, or as it is generally called, Akka ; it is a mere fortified khan ; near it is the Tel Akka, which seems artificial. Ruins are scattered about, squared blocks of stone, &c., and a few columns. This may be the ancient Akkar, the birthplace of Alexander Severus. I can hardly believe, however, the castle of Akkar to be the place that took from Raymond of Tholouse the terror of his name to Moslem ears ; so that perhaps stood on the Tel, and the present is but a more modern building. The Crusaders attacked it a second time, with better success, just after they had been bought off from the siege of Gebaile. Up this plain lies Kalaat el Hosn, and the

hospitable convent of Mar Georgias : these are on the southern slopes of the northern range, or the Djebel Ansayrii. Of the northern parts of the southern range, nothing whatever is known, and the Frank, except on the high road from Safyta or Mar Georgias to Baalbec, is unknown.

In the plain are some villages of Turkomans, who speak the Turkish language ; these make excellent carpets ; and on Djebel Akka there are a mixed population of Ismaly, Ansayrii, and Mussulmans. The tourist would do well to give up following the regular route, and visit these unknown parts : at that moment I could not. On arriving at my tent, I witnessed one of those sudden deaths so common among horses during the summer months in this country ; the poor beast—my best—sprung into the air, fell on its face and knees, and, after a few feeble struggles, died. On the following day I continued on the road to Tripoli, but fearful of fever and heat, left it on my right, and turned up the valley of the Kadisha. From this height, the great size of ancient Tripoli, when it occupied the whole space between the towers, may be traced. The valley was very beautiful and luxurious, the road passing

between gardens of all sorts of fruits, rich and ripe. In an hour we crossed a ridge, leaving the valley of the Kadisha on our south, and the road then lay over a hot ridge whence the harvest had been plucked. It was now bare, except a few olives. Here I would fain have pitched my tent, beneath the shade of two enormous sycamores, but unfortunately there was no water, so we pushed on to the village of Zratta, where the people of Edhen pass the winter. It stands on high ground, two rivers flowing round the base of its hills.

Mr. W. K. Kelly's book on the East is admirable, and the most useful book the traveller can put into his saddle-bag ; but he ought not, in a work really meant for use, to quote M. de Lamartine. We want a mere account of the road, not of stupendous precipices, (meaning high hills,) and of roads over precipitous passes, where it is a plain : the hyperbole of the poet is ill exchanged for the truth of a guide-book.

Leaving Tripoli below, we skirted the town, riding along the top of the hill, whose sea-face the houses cover ; descending a steep hill, we rode up the valley of the Kadisha, whose banks are lined

with fruit trees ; sometimes the road led under the shade, but more generally above the verdure along the valley side. Passed the Kontaret el Brins, an aqueduct, spanning the valley. After an hour's ride up the valley, crossed a low ridge, the road plain, dry, and sun-burnt, with scattered olive trees ; the distant mountains of Djebel Denieh and Akka looked cool with their verdure and their snow.—

“ The horrid crags by toppling convents crowned,
The pine trees hoar that clothe the shaggy sheep,
The mountain moss by scorching skies embrowned,
The sunken glen, whose sunless scrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unrippled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow branch below,
Mixed in one mighty maze, with varied beauty glow.”

Met a poor Frank, whose condition induced me to pitch my tent at Zorta, a large Maronite village. The servants had passed me as I loitered speaking to the Italian, and on my road I found my luggage all in a house, and a man ready to welcome me in, saying, “ *Bono Seneor no bono, Englese bono me bono.*” Alas ! it now flashed on me that I was in the route of the tourist : for awhile I resigned myself to my fate.

No peace—the house an oven, my servants off

their discipline, and I patiently watching and waiting. A crowd sit round, one presents six plums — *Backshish, seneor, backshish*. Abdallah pays, it is returned with indignation. *Englese jid aisereen fodder la urshein*—"An Englishman give a penny! No, fourpence." Next a book is brought me to put my name in: it was new—"Aaron Smith, a patient pilgrim, with a hopeful heart." I was intended to stand next—so my host wished. What should I put? "F. W., an impatient vagrant, with no hope." I therewith broke away, sneaked out of the house, and at last my dear canvas home rose in a quiet olive garden without the village. My host received his money, and being satisfied, left me to live in what way I pleased, though he grumbled most audibly at my taste. The priest made his appearance, which changed the conversation.

Almost one of the first questions he asked was, "Of what religion are you?" The Italian, however, answered for me. The Italian, the priest, and myself dined under the fig tree. During the meal the Padre got the pistols from one of my servants, which, as they were mine, was an act of faithlessness on the part of my domestic which I did not approve of. The way the priest obtained them,

the playful way he asked to look at one and pocketed it, amused me very much. On hearing it was mine, he looked surprised, but kept it.

Sunday.—Early the bell sounded to prayers. The priest on the previous day had asked the Italian to attend, a call he thought proper to despise. The whole village crowded round me, so I found study impossible, and no hint would get them away, even when I wished to wash. At first they seemed inclined to resist the closing of the tent door ; but a little argument convinced them this was unfair. In fact, they seemed to think that any stranger's admission into the country depended on their will, and were proud of the victory they obtained in having expelled the American missionaries.

Among the people was an intelligent wealthy man from Tripoli ; he said that when the missionaries were driven out and retired to Tripoli, he applied to the Holy Patriarch to know if it was lawful to sell to them, for the Patriarch had interdicted all intercourse with them ; he represented the loss it would be, as they were among their best customers ; so the Patriarch gave him a dispensation to sell, but not to speak, hail, or enter their

house, except on business. The same man was describing the Protestant faith ; he said he had had the account of it from a Protestant, who resided some time at Edhen.—“ I neither pray, nor fast, nor lie, nor wrong, nor steal, nor commit adultery.” The priest was furious when I said that such a religion struck me as better than one of which fasting and prayer were the only virtues. As he sat with me, several people waited on him to beg permission, some to travel, some to go and work in the fields, and to these he gave permission ; all who passed saluted him with a “ Peace be with you, father ; prosperity on you, father.”

Zorta is the winter village of the inhabitants of Edhen ; the land about it is well cultivated, the hill-sides producing corn ; the spots capable of irrigation produce mulberries for the silk-worms, and fruits for the Tripoli market. The sheik had repaired to Edhen ; but was employed in a divan held on a Mussulman Effendi at Tripoli. The Effendi is the owner of a small village in the valley, inhabited partly by Christians, partly by Mussulmans. The former had lately repaired their church and put up a bell. This raised the ire of the Turks, who, headed by the Effendi, broke the bell and the

priest's head. A complaint was directly made to the Pasha of Beyrout, who referred the case to the local government. A species of jury was appointed, one-half Mussulmans from Tripoli, one-half Christians. The Effendi, however, refused to come and be tried. At this juncture I arrived, and the Christians referred to me. I said, "Make him come." They said "He is a great man, we cannot." "Well, then, go on with the trial." They did so ; but as the Christians were all firm one way, and the Mussulmans the other, nothing could be done ; then the Christians were rather afraid, so peace was made.

Left Zorta in the evening ; the road accommodating itself to the side of the mountains is pretty good. Passed the Kalaat Berber, a country palace, erected by Berber Pasha, prettily situated ; the land well cultivated, villages in all directions. At eve pitched our tents near the huts of some people who are here to collect the last of the silk crop. In the morning, with the earliest dawn, we were off. The scenery grand and fine ; the road far from being as bad as those of the more southern mountains ; the lower slopes and gorges were well cultivated, but the mountain-tops were

stony, and sun-burnt, here and there clothed with patches of cypress, which, however, seem not to attain a good size. That these, as well as the cedars are indigenous, we have the record of the Book of Ecclesiasticus (xxiv. 13,)—"And as a cypress upon the mountain of Hermon."

After a pleasant ride, through scenery every moment increasing in beauty, we reached Edhen ; a plain springs half way down from the mountain side, and clipping a range, we turned northerly ; here the plain narrows, and we come upon Edhen, built on the south-western slope of the mountain. The village is embedded in walnut-trees of enormous size ; this, and its being built on a steep slope, prevent its extent from being seen ; but it is said to contain 4000 souls. The Lazaris Convent, where the kind fathers will prove to one who like myself has seen no society for months, truly delightful company, affords, perhaps, the best view. Vast mountains, grand, but sun-dried, surround the place. Above Edhen rises a lofty peak, crowned with a chapel ; from it a view may be obtained of the whole country : numerous villages, where cheerful bells strike tender chords of home, and hallowed fanes of quiet peace, and summer Sundays ; laboured terraces,

watered and fruitful; while beneath, in one mass of pines, fruit-trees, and verdure, lies the deep valley of the Kadisha. Kanobin is hid in its gorge: the scene is one of great beauty.

Two days passed here pleasantly; the evenings, though it was the middle of July, were cool, and beneath the wide-spread shade of the walnut, the noonday sun was unfelt. The fathers told me, that spite of the fond boast of the people, the climate was not good, particularly for those who had weak chests, and fevers of malignant kinds abounded. These Frank Padres hold themselves much aloof from the natives, for whom they do not seem to have the strongest affection. One, a kind intelligent Frenchman, said, "You will hardly believe me when I say, that I sincerely wish any European power would take this country, even the Russians, so you see I think the evil great; but wrapt in their fanaticism and ignorance, isolated, exclusive, the people will learn nothing." The sheik's house is a large barn-like building, with a little European furniture, which looks strangely exotic: he himself is too well known to need my praising, or mentioning him.

After dangling sufficiently, and having been

looked at by all the village, who, even when the tent was shut, peered into it at corners and loopholes, I left about four hours after sunset. The road from Edhen is good for a mountain road, passing along the ledge of plain on the mountain side where it pauses ere forming the deep gorges which yawn beneath. I passed on my right the famous spring, the virtues of whose water the inhabitants so loudly praise. Near it, sheltered by walnut trees, is a small Latin convent ; I forget its name. The scenery grows grander, the mountains rise steep and bare, save that here and there a gorge still shelters a streak of snow from the melting heat. The mountains here form a semi-circle, surrounding north and east "the glory of Lebanon." The whole route is beautifully cultivated : the water, which gushes from their sides, is carried about in a thousand fertilising streams : now its level is kept by an aqueduct, to carry it to some distant highland ; now divided into channels, it pours over an extensive plateau ; the upper lands produce corn and barley : this is yet uncut, there being nearly two months' difference in the seasons here and in the plains. It was dark ; we rode on by moonlight,

all was silence, yet it seemed not the silence of desolation ; but rather the solemn stillness of a vast cathedral. Far beneath us twinkled the lights of Bshirrai, as we rounded the head of the depth in which it lay, its roaring stream scarce sounding above a murmur, and then we entered Lebanon, this fane of nature, this memorial of old.

The evening was cold, and the damp air heavy with the perfume of the scattered seeds and branches. As the bivouac fire blazed up, crackled, glowed, and warmed through, the whole air was perfumed with aromatic scent. I regretted thus, as it were, being the instrument of the fulfilment of a dire curse : “ And they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire : open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.”

It was difficult to sleep in such a spot. The moon shade of the trees fell on the ground ; the large trunks resembled pillars, and formed vistas, whose depths were hid in darkness and mystery ; the wind moaned mournfully through the vast natural arcades, while all around a solemn stillness reigned. It seemed as if thus, in the silence of

midnight, these, the pride of the mountain, mourned over the fall and decay of their fellows. The clump of trees is situated on the western side of a vast amphitheatre, formed by a bend in the mountains to the south. The range above the northernmost part of Djebel Libnan runs east and southern as far as this, whence it takes a sudden and sharp bend to the south. The northern ranges are not known as Djebel Libnan, and even this perhaps is properly Djebel Denieh ; so we see how correct is the geographer who stated the Raas el Shakkey to be the northern limit of the Djebel Libnan. The cedars themselves stand on several small knolls, whose faces they cover, the knolls being situated on rising ground.

Southerly, the land falls away in many a hill and valley. South-south-east, towers up the highest peak in northern Lebanon. The mountains themselves have a barren, storm-swept appearance, and seem as if man had never trod their steeps ; precipitous, but not rocky, they afford a scanty pasture to a few herds of goats ; the trees form a clump, which a person may easily walk round in half-an-hour, and are of various growth, age, and size. Amidst these are scattered the venerable

fathers, the recorded of prophecy, the mentioned of Scripture, the type of the love, the memorials of the fallen verdure of these once forest-clad mountains. The older trees are now mere wrecks, except one or two ; and their summer verdure but ill conceals the effects of wintry blasts and sullen storms. They, however, still possess vitality ; and the young branches swathe with their greenness the sturdy arms broken in the elemental war. The younger, among which are many of noble size, are healthy and flourishing, though generally growing too near each other to have room to throw abroad their branches. The second, nay even the third generation here standing, are fine trees ; “the boughs thereof were like goodly cedars.” (Psalm lxxx. 10.) The whole are prettily strewn about, and the ground beneath being open and unencumbered with brushwood, they form a grove pleasing and beautiful, independent of all other associations.

“The trees of the Lord are full of sap,—the cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted.” Well then may these trees impress our minds ; well may they exercise an influence which the other beauties of nature, all miraculous as they are, fail

to do. The trees the Lord has planted ! for centuries, men, the pious and the bad, have worn their way through toil and danger to visit this sacred grove. Here, spite of oppression, fears, and fines, the fathers of the Christians have come, and, raising an humble altar to their God, have offered up their heartfelt prayer. Storm and tempest have sped forth ; the winter's blast, the summer's drought, have sent forth their terrors, yet here they stand, a monument of prophecy,—a living witness to the truth of truths. Yet not unscathed ; for “the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars” (Psalm v. 15), and their gnarled, bent, leafless limbs stand forth, and show how true is every tittle of the word. Here in their storm-cut forms, in the decaying trunk, and blasted branches of the noblest and best, we see how “He will strike all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lofty” (Isaiah ii. 13) ; while the lowly flourish in perfect beauty. Long are the years, weary the summers, fierce the winters they have borne. Yet such as do stand, may yet live on ; as do we, so may they look for the day when the whole earth shall rest and be quiet, and his people burst into singing :—
“ Then will the fir-trees rejoice, and the cedars of

Lebanon, saying : since thou art (sin) laid down, no feller is come up against us."

The trees belong to the Sultan, but, situated in a Christian district, they are naturally preserved ; and the principal foes they have to fear, are probably the pilgrims who come to admire, and, alas ! too often to wound and break. It would be perhaps not wrong to say that they have not been cut for many years. The first Moslem fleet was probably hewn from Djebel Okral, and forests nearer the coast ; and as the Christians, except Metualis, have probably been the only inhabitants near for centuries, what guards them now would have guarded them then.

A small stone church has been erected on the highest knoll, and a little stone rest-house, where the traveller will find companions he need not go to the cedars to find. The traveller must carry everything with him, as there is no habitation near, and water even has to be brought from half-an-hour's distance. Around the hills are some caves, that will repay the geologist who visits them. The thermometer during my stay did not rise above 75° even in the sun. The older trees still numbered eleven, or even twelve, if the one

near the south side of the church be counted as two ; but this renders the reckoning of them difficult, as springing from the same root ; but beneath the ground (all above being separate) it is difficult to pronounce whether they are two or one. The older ones divide into two or more stems, branching out with strange contortions. They may call to mind the Laocoon struggling with the serpents. Russegger is inclined to admit the age of the patriarchs of the grove as two thousand years. A little more would make them contemporaries of the Prophet Ezekiel,—two thousand four hundred years.

Decandolle, who has turned his inquisitive mind to this subject with his usual ardour, seems to believe that trees do not die of old age, in the real sense of the word, but would live for ever if provided with an unlimited supply of nourishment, and not shaken or destroyed by storms or some other of the many accidents they are subject to. This is perhaps proved by these trees. The storms break and shatter them, but we still see vitality in all portions left standing, even of the most aged ; and they rather seem as broken and thus destroyed, than as dying by any natural law.

Such life as is left, even in the most injured or decayed, is vigorous, the bark full of gum and fresh, the few branches perfect, shooting forth with youthful verdure.

Ambitious travellers have sadly defaced these pleasing monuments with unsightly cuts. The bark torn from the venerable trees, opens space for names, which neither add nobility to the tree, nor enhance our esteem for the character of the writer. I was glad to see that the Arab and foreigner have sinned more than the Englishman. Over many, the bark has grown, and a few cuts in the closing wound, alone mark the spot. The marks in others still remain, though the hand that cut has sunk mouldering to the dust. I saw one of the seventeenth century. Laborde, Blombard, figure in stout characters. A. Lamartine had a huge space, but some later visitor has effaced the name, and that of his daughter alone remains. Burckhardt's (honour to it even among the cedars), may be seen near the little hovel. I searched for the names of some others, though I felt they would not inscribe theirs on these tablets of prophecy ; nor was it perhaps inconsistent, as it may seem, that without a regret I found my presentiment true.

And wherefore the cause that here, on a stony, comparatively barren spot, these trees only flourish, when over the mountains there are rich and fertile tracts, less exposed and more adapted to their growth ? It is His will : He has said “the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few ;” nor can we doubt, from their number, the exact fulfilment of the prophecy, that “a child may write them.” (Chron. x. 19.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Valley of Bshirra—Terraces on the Mountains—Beauty of the Scenery—Importunate Beggars—Intermarriages prevent Patriotism—Dress of the Peasantry—Mode of Irrigation in Syria—Gorge of the Kadisha—Mirage in the Plain of Bekaa—Lake Liemon—Remains of the Temple at Liemon—A Natural Bath—Low condition of the Village—Effect of Moonlight—Village of Nitri—Village of Afka—Source of the Nahr Ibrahim—Religious Reflections—Village of Ferheika—Ruins of Fuckera—Position of Fuckera—Nahr-el-Kelb—Beyrout—Objects and Results of Travel—Conclusion of my Pilgrimage.

LEAVING the cedars in a southerly direction, we passed out amidst the numerous hillocks that surround them, and entered on a small plain, green with pasturage and unripe corn ; though that in the plains below has been cut a month, this is yet quite unripe.

Looking back now on the cedars, they are hid by hillocks, of which many stand on all sides of them, and their tops barely appear. A short ride now brought me to the head of the valley of Bshirra. The scene is one of peculiar beauty : as we stand on a prominent rock, the valley falls beneath us perpendicularly to a great depth, discovering deep fissures, whence rise the numerous springs that form the sources ; the sides are bold rock, broken

and craggy. A little lower down, the valley beneath widens, and there its bottom is green, tilled and cultivated ; lower still, it sinks again to a lower level. Now gradually, but in one precipice, the mountains on either side nearly close, and a mere gulf is left, through which, midst massive verdure, the silver stream works its way—clear, bright, and rapidly swelling to a river.

Just above the gulf, or where the valley assumes its narrow and precipitous character, on the right bank, is Bshirra, a mass of green from the top to the bottom ; terrace on terrace, planted with poplars, mulberry-trees, and amidst these are the houses ; amid the gardens meander threads of water, led with care to irrigate, and then falling in foaming cascades to the stream beneath. The sides of this upper portion of the valley are terraced and cultivated with extreme care—honour to the labourer ! Below where it narrows, precipitous rocks—admitting of no verdure, save a few hard-lived creepers—defy the skill of the husbandman. The upper portion is, as I have said, the valley of Bshirra, the lower that of Kanobin.*

* Burckhardt describes the inroads of the Metuali on the Maronites, which rendered the Patriarch's stay at Kanobin unsafe. They formerly had many villages among the Maronites. At last, in what year I cannot

We descended by a gully running parallel to the valley, but divided from it by a narrow ridge of mountains. This hid all from us till we emerged over the village, and descended by a horse-killing, stony road, precipitous in the extreme. The scene was beautiful: the village scattered amidst its gardens, waters, houses, churches; the village gathers on a promontory that stands over the valley. It contains two hundred houses, seven churches,—I could only see four, but they assured me there were seven—and fourteen sheiks or gentlemen. As we passed down, cascades and falls were added to the scene.

On a snug pretty gorge, higher up the valley than the village on the same side, high up, sheltered amidst walnuts and other trees, is a Convent of Carmelites, now containing three fathers; they have a lovely retreat, these Carmelites, and if a

find, the Maronites rose against their oppressors; and though far less warlike, they, instigated and fired on by their priests, drove them fairly out of the district, and since then, have held undisputed possession of all this large district. Bshirra itself, I believe, was once a Metuali village. Certainly they were far more numerous. But the Metuali have a high character for warriors and courage. This shows what the Catholic population might become, if united; and, I think, there is little doubt, if excited by their priests, they could gain the whole mountains. They are, however, now worse armed than any of the other sects, as they either gave their arms up, or were compelled to do so on the late disarming of the mountaineers.

contemplation of nature under its loveliest form can attune the mind to prayer and gratitude to God, theirs is the spot for anchorite to dwell in. Two wooden crosses conspicuously placed occupy the heights over the convent. The rocks assume most curious fantastic forms, and one near their home forms a perfect pyramid.

Crossing the valley, we mounted among the well tilled terraces on the opposite side, and camped amidst the groves of the pretty village of Bourdarsher, just opposite to Bshirra. The people crowded round me, assuring me Franks in abundance stayed here, at the same time they clamorously demanded backshish ; though they had not learnt that fearful word, but cried in their dialect, which few English would understand, “Attene tick ; * Hassanee, Hassanee :” the former being a species of slang term for twenty paras, the latter the downright, “Give me something.” This village is under the Sheik Abou Dagher of Bshirra, within whose district it is comprised.

Just at the entrance of the Wady Kanobin, on the right, under the rocks, on a level almost with the river, is the Maronite convent of

* *Tick*.—Does our word *tick* come from this? The Ansayrii say *Boutick* or *Abou tick*.

St. Elisha. The fathers remain there both winter and summer. Potatoes are extensively cultivated about Edhen ; I cannot learn the period when they were introduced : the people begin to appreciate them, though, as yet, they are principally cultivated for sale at the sea-ports. The women here wear a peculiar head-dress, a small silver cup on the back top part of their heads. Its beauty is elsewhere covered by the veil ; here, in this exclusively Christian district, they do not veil at all. The people are fine and well-looking, but no enquiries, as well of my own as of the fathers, as to their origin were successful. The type of face is decidedly not Oriental. Again, there is the absence of all data, as well as family name—if records exist, I never could hear of them. The priests rather encourage their intermarriages, it binds the people more closely to their families ; and hence we never find a Christian with any patriotism—he loves his village, and of it his family only ; and these laws of intermarriage few ever break through. In stating this I allude to the Maronites more than the other sects.

The traveller will be struck, also, with the very superior style of the houses here to those further

north. The lower courses of all, and the whole of many, are built of squared stones, well cut : they have a large room in front, and an open verandah, whose roof rests on pillars of stone. Within, the room is lined with mud, neatly plastered ; huge blocks of wood support the beams of the roof, over which are stakes and earth ; light is admitted through square windows, of which each house has generally two. Large tubes of cane, cleanly plastered without, hold the stores of grain, &c. The vines near here are suffered to grow over the ground : this, however, seems preferable to training them over the fruit-trees, as is done in many places, much to the detriment of the trees they thus encumber.*

The men here wear the tarboush much after the fashion of the Italian fishermen's caps, hanging gracefully on one side : so far well, but beneath it they place the felt skull-cap, which has an unsightly appearance. The cap on the head of the women also undergoes a change, being large at

* The cultivation of the vine is so well described in "The Modern Traveller," vol. i., p. 171, that I cannot do better than refer the reader to it. The growth of the vine and making wine form one of the great sources of wealth of this district. It will not bear carriage, as it ferments and bursts whatever it is put in. Indian corn is much cultivated for home consumption.

either end, and small in the middle ; it is higher, also, perhaps six inches in the whole, whereas the other was not three. We turned up a side valley about east, and passing through a small village the grounds around which were as well cultivated as those of their neighbours, water abounding in every direction, we continued our tedious ascent.

Throughout Syria, an inconvenient practice exists of letting the streams when not used for irrigation run over the roads ; thus the traveller has to stem the water, and to withstand the slipperiness occasioned by it. The people assign want of space as the cause ; but have a better reason, though they do not know it. The stream, by this method, runs over rocks and stones, of which the inhabitants have abundance, and can afford a loss, whereas if it ran elsewhere, it would carry with it more soil than the fertility it would produce would repay. Pursuing our route, we reached the level of the cedars, now some distance northward of us, and, half hid as they were by hills, they looked but an insignificant clump. Ascending a barren mountain side, where a few goats sought scanty pasture, we entered a small stony plain, on which were large masses of snow,

fast melting beneath a sun of 80° Fahrenheit. The ascent of the main ridge, now above us, was a tedious job, and the baggage horses had often to pause. As I reached the top, a large drove of camels came along the ridge, which was broad and level; they were going for corn. Their Arab conductors spoke the dialect of the plains of Homs, but their features had nothing Bedoween in them. It took two and a half hours, from the place where I slept, to reach the summit. The wind was cold and cutting, yet the sun was drawn from its sheath, as the Arabs say.

The view from this elevation is very extensive to the west. We stand on an amphitheatre of mountains, and now find that the Djebel Libnan converges, till it almost meets the Raas el Shakkey, proving that to be the northern range of the Lebanon. Southwards, the mountain ridge we are on ascends to a peak, as also north, far higher than the pass we ascended. Before us lie the Cedars, Bshirra, and the deep gorge of the Kadisha, while the country, broken into a thousand mountains, hills, valleys, gulfs, and precipices, slopes towards the sea. Tripoli lies hid beneath the mountains; but we see the waters washing round

the base of the Prosopon, while the further ocean is veiled behind a thousand fleecy clouds.

Turning east, the Bekaa, Cælo-Syria, and Beled Baalbec lie beneath us, with a thousand places sounded by the trumpet of fame, engraved on the records of the past, while the range of the Anti-Lebanon bounds the view. The sun in the east had a singular effect ; the whole perspective was lost, and the plain of the Bekaa seemed steep mountain-side ; the mirage also was powerful, and I gained a head-ache in return for my gaze. Patches of snow lay around, on which handsome goats were voraciously quenching their thirst. The descent on the eastern face was steep, the mountain sides clothed with a few dwarf trees, among which I noticed several junipers. Around the foot smaller ranges, bare and stony, stretched out to the plain ; half way down I caught sight of my bourne, the little sequestered Lake Liemon, lying among low, dull, uninteresting, barren hills.

Passed the rich little strip of plain where is Ainete, consisting of a few scattered huts ; here the harvest was being gathered : potatoes, for which I particularly longed ; alas ! unfit for eating. A long strip, as if a river-bed, partly cultivated,

partly stones and bushes, led to the little village of Liemon, situated on the northern corner of the lake, inhabited by a mixed population of Metualis and Maronites. The poor bushes on our road were all broken and torn, owing, I was told, to the storms of the past winter. Put up at a Christian's house to escape the sun.

After a sumptuous meal off the fathers of fowls, and a green gourd from my landlady's garden, I sallied forth. The lake lies N.N.E. and S.S.W., and is about 1900 yards long by 600 broad, though a month and a half, or two months back, it was much larger. This, of course, I only heard; though the water marks were still evident on the rocks, and much of the northern plain was still a swamp. After thirty days, or towards the middle of August, the whole is said to be dry; and a fine crop of grass occupies its place. My servants and myself sounded it as well as we could without a boat; but the want of this I supplied with a mackintosh tub, which, except two capsizes, and the slow rotatory mode in which it progressed, did excellently. I found in two places 20 feet, and in one 22 feet; but the average was 5, 6, $6\frac{1}{2}$; at one spot the sounder I used was dragged down as if

a vortex was absorbing the water; the draught, however, capsized my bark, and with my efforts to save tub, lead, line, and the servant who was with me, the spot was lost, nor could I again find it.*

The remains of the temple, now sadly destroyed, consist of four sides of wall, of which only three courses remain; the lower of the smaller stones stand on their edges, the next two of blocks of 5 feet long by some 3 feet high and 2 feet 8 inches thick; it faces, by compass, N., 15 E., and the shorter side at right angles. The inner wall was washed by the lake, and the whole was surrounded by a greasy swamp. Within this now the remains of the steps may still be traced; facing south is the higher platform,—a square where the outer edge of the stones slopes away, and one stone alone remains of the upper course, and that broken and chipped. I noticed but one shaft of a column full 5 feet in diameter, the piece was 9 feet high, one capital plain and rudely cut, and one architrave with a plain square, and two circles, one within

* Little water now seems to flow from Ainete to Liemon, as I could find no traces of a water-course, though at a former period the valley itself was one; it is lower and narrow. A good flow of water, while I was at Ainete, flowed along the valley; but it was expended in irrigation.

the other, placed alternately ; the whole has been well morticed, and I noticed the wedge-shaped mortice at present in use. The stones used were quarried around ; but I found two or three finer pieces of a coarse marble : one small piece I carried off, but it was stolen by one of the villagers, who accompanied me.

About fifty yards west of the foot of the works is the principal fountain which supplies the lake ; it flows in a pretty cascade to the lake, a portion being diverted to turn a bridge, the rest still forms a considerable stream. The water proceeds from the rock ; a deep pool causes the spring : pure, clear, with a bright pebbly bottom, it might have well served as a bath for the Queen of Beauty, when, sated with pleasure, she reposed her limbs in the arms of the river nymphs. The rock was overhung with roses, which diffused a fragrant yet secure shade ; the chaste goddess herself might have indulged in the pool without fear of licentious intruders. Above these, rude niches are cut, and the pool itself bears marks of the mason. There are several rude caves in the rocks around, and one niche, cut on the rock—as if for a statue—faces the east, overlooking the temple. There were three mills still

under water from the floods during my visit, the roofs just showing ; yet they say the working them for thirty or five and twenty days pays for them.* The pasturage is fed off by the cattle of the inhabitants of the village, who have numerous horses, donkeys, and cows.

The village has no sheik ; it is under the rule of the Ameer Khanfar, and is now under the temporary government of an Osmanli sent by the Pasha of Damascus ; the Ameer, for a late insurrection, having been exiled to Constantinople. The tax is about 18*l.* per annum. The poll-tax is paid to the Christian Ameer of the mountains. The whole village contains twelve houses, but in each house are several hovels, and often more than one family. The water is cold : the shores produce a water-weed with a small white flower. Within the village I saw a shaft, similar to one in the temple, and a stone water-trough ; but I could not find out whether that had been brought there or not, though they say the stones used in building the houses are from thence, and, therefore, probably these are also. The Christians and Metualis seem to dwell together like neighbours. The popula-

* These mills can only work during the period the water is running off.

tion being absent collecting their crops, I had no opportunity of judging of their numbers, nor in fact did I see one *Metualis* during my stay. The winters are said to be severe, snow lying deep on the ground.

The lake is dry till May, when it fills rapidly ; the springs begin to flow in April. I counted three ; one here by the village, the mountain stream I have described, and a mountain stream in the south ; but the one I have described is the principal : the fountain they say is perfectly dry after the middle of August.

My tent was pitched within the enclosure, which is somewhat higher than the surrounding space. A block from the ruins formed the table ; it was the only semblance of one I had used for months. The moon rose in unclouded splendour, lighting up the waters of the mystic lake, which sparkled with joy beneath the beam. A broad way of light lay across the surface, resting at the very feet of the steps of the altar.

On the following morning, rode along the lake, which had fallen considerably during the night. A foot more of the mills, at least, were above water. Passed up a well-wooded valley, with

prettily-varied scenery, abounding with partridges and pigeons. In a couple of hours, the surrounding scenery had changed to rocky hills, barren, sterile, and untrodden. Came upon an encampment of villagers, who presented us with a goat, for which they refused all remuneration. This was owing, perhaps, to our speaking to them entirely in Turkish, for at first they by no means received us kindly. After a weary ride through these sterile hills, where, though the wind blew with violence, the thermometer showed 97° Fahr., their character changed; the height increased; the sides became clothed, and we passed along a gorge of great beauty. Magnificent precipices, fantastic crags, valleys occasionally opening their heights, hid amidst masses of clouds. In five-and-a-half hours I reached the Christian village of Nitri. It stands in a magnificent valley, from whence several others opened; on the east, the mountains towering up with great grandeur.

Nitri is about half-a-mile from the river Ibrahim. On the opposite bank is Afka, a large Metuali village. The houses were flat-roofed, and built of mud and bushes. I rode down to the river-bank, and passed the noon-day heat under some magnificent

walnut-trees. East, lay a lofty height, which, with its range, swept round, enclosing us. Here and there, up its almost precipitous sides, hung some dwarf-trees, and a few steps helped the Metuali to its top, which is one of their fortresses of retirement when pressed by the foe. On the south, some hundreds of feet above us, was the village, sunk into quiet under the noon-day heat. Behind us, opened far down a deep valley ; while, further, mountain and gorge swept away in wild and varied beauty. In front, again, at the base, a huge cave opened in the height, from whence flowed a mighty stream, gigantic even at its birth,—a lusty infant even from its mother's womb. Within twenty yards of the fountain, a broad, high-pitched bridge passed over it, beneath which the young waters flowed ; then, dashing down in sheet on sheet, midst spray and foam, they ran with rapid torrent past my shady retreat, and, far off, diminished to a streak of silver, disappeared in the gorge its bed was composed of,—boulders fallen from the rocks above,—while green fresh verdure edged its rough couch.

On the south bank, above the bridge the people say the village formerly stood, but that it and its site were destroyed by a land-slip ; the appearance

of the ground speaks to the truth of this, and it would seem to have been at no very remote period.* On the right of the road, south of the bridge, or that side furthest from the mountain, stand the remains of a large building. This was, probably, a temple ; but the ruins, having fallen in, cover all traces of form or outline. This is the source of the Nahr Ibrahim : the only two books I have give different accounts of it ; but if Afka is Aphaia, this would be the Temple of Venus.† With regret, I must leave this to those who can consult ancient authorities.

A Metuali boy showed me a stone, on which was an inscription. The stone, I should think, had fallen from the mountain side, as the back and sides were uncut. I regret much that, from its sloping position and the glare of the sun, I was unable to copy it as I should have wished. Along the bed on the right bank of the river, are marks of buildings and some few

* The cliff here retires, making a sweep ; so, though the bridge is not far from the source, yet beyond there was, previous to the landslip, ample room for a village of the size of the present, or even larger.

† The name of *Afka* is found in the ancient geography of Syria. At Aphaia, according to Zosimus, was a temple of Venus, where the handsomest girls of Syria sacrificed to the goddess. It was situated near a small lake, between Heliopolis and the sea-coast.—*Burckhardt*.

remains. If this is the temple mentioned by Eusebius, we may thank the early Christians, and not time, for its destruction. It must ever grieve a true-hearted son of the Church to condemn the conduct of his mother : and we must look back with regret to these fanatic acts. Alas ! that Christians will not obey their Master's command, and be harmless as doves ! This however, is a delicate subject. If we presume to condemn, the bigot says we are supine and weak in our belief. Let him wag : I would rather not see our faith spread, than see it disgraced by one act of violence, of bigotry, or of oppression. Truth will prevail : I ask no other weapon. Never was parable truer, or of more frequent application, than the mote and the beam.

Fortune led me to find a dear friend, whom I fancied far away, sketching by the stream. After an early dinner, we started together, and turning W. by S. over a barren, uninhabited waste, came, in two hours and a half, to the Nebbi Hadded (spring of iron), a cold spring, of great celebrity. A rude place has been built over it. We found here one lone Arab tent, looking cold, solitary,

and out of place, amidst the wild mountains. A long gorge now ran on our right, nearly east, profoundly deep, the heights on either side magnificently grand ; those on the northern side the Djebel Nehall, and the gorge, the Wady Almass, or Valley of Diamonds ; the sides and tops clothed with forest, seemingly virgin—they were so wild, so dense, so vast ; among them, here and there, rose rocks, resembling barons' castles, or the strongholds of bandit chiefs. In the lower parts were a few villages, Metuali or Christian. The two first of these had each its large clumsy church : these were Artava and Zeron. The wilder northern parts of the mountains, I was told, were entirely Metuali.

Skirting over the ridge, we reached a further valley, divided into two at its upper part. A deep, zigzag descent brought us, after sunset, to the large wealthy Maronite village of Ferheika, situated on a fine slope amid vast plantations of mulberries. The next day we ascended to the top of the forks seen yesterday, to see the springs of honey, Ain Assal, and Ain Leban, (spring of Leban,) which flow from them ;* thence round the valley

* It is always impossible in the East to find truth save by actual

to the natural bridge on the north slope of Djebel Kesrouan, a ridge just northwest of Sanin, or Sermain, from thence over the ridge south, till an hour's ride from the natural bridge, brought us to Kakkra, Mezza, or, as I should from the pronunciation write it, Fuckera. This is the ruin Burckhardt heard of, but did not visit ; it is placed on a plateau, forming a small plain. To the east rises the Djebel Kesrouan ; while on the other side the land slopes away. The ruins command a fine view of mountains, wild and beautiful on all sides : in the far distance lies Beyrout, a mass of green, the silver sands fringing the blue depths of the Mediterranean. The ruins are extensive, and the ground and terraces around of well-squared blocks, attest its former size. A large temple first invites inspection : the walls are built of uncemented stones, one layer thick, and now greatly shaken, and ruined, seemingly, by an earthquake. The first building presents a large parallelogram of wall partly fallen. The east face

observation. One of our men, a horseman of the Ameer Hyder's, the ex-Kaimakan of the mountain, said, they were the sources of the Nahr el Kelb. Subsequent observation led me to find this was incorrect ; they were the sources of some river farther north, perhaps the Nahr Miltein ; or else confluent of Ibrahim. A correct survey of Syria would be a great gain. A really true and correct survey,—not an amateur's dead reckoning.

perfectly plain, save a few pilasters, runs north to south. This leads to an inner court : a face then presents itself, raised from the ground five steps, or perhaps seven, across which run columns whose huge pedestals alone remain—the columns and their Doric capitals lying broken about. Within, again, leaving a space between, stood columns which likewise crossed the whole width of the building. Within is a space free of ruins ; without, opposite the eastern face, is a platform, which is higher than the surrounding level. A little east is a small square building. About a quarter of a mile north is another building of great solidity, of which but one chamber remains. On the east face was an inscription. Between these two are numerous traces of buildings. To the west the backs of these buildings abut on rocks that rise up in fantastic forms, while among them is a fine stream of water. South of the road also are further marks of buildings. Here we wiled away the noon-day heat beneath the shade—a wretched quivering shade it was, reminding us of Sir Walter Scott's simile of woman's wavering, variable, uncertain love. Our paths were different, and from hence we verged to different points.

Fuckera is finely situated, and the inhabitants must enjoy coolness in summer, while the surrounding heights shelter them from the blasts of winter. The western view would enliven their retreat, for the eye fell on a varied country ; on smiling villages, imbedded in their verdure, shaded by the clustering of their vines, the stately growth of the poplar, and the productive branches of their mulberry.*

Starting, I reached Kafir Debien, a fine large

* Whether silk is indigenous to Syria, or whether it was introduced in the fifth century when silk was first introduced into the Roman empire, is a question involving considerable research ; but the cultivation of it is now universal over Syria. And

“ Velleraque ut foliis deputant tenuia Seres,”

may be truly said of the Syrian women, as of old of the sons of India. In fact, besides the crops, they constitute the great wealth of the mountains, and the amount produced, and plantations of mulberries are yearly increasing. New kinds are introduced, and the produce and revenue increase yearly. The worms spin at different seasons, early in the plains, the whole crop being finished in June ; while in the mountains, July and August are the months. There are houses expressly for the worms. The mulberries are mere pollards, from whence the boughs are cut and put on the shelves where the worms are : round earthen pans are placed for them to spin in. Much of the silk is now spun off by the European manufactories, whose superior machinery spin it more closely, and make the yarn more regular. The natives use enormous wheels turned by a horse or by hand ; and much is lost or spoiled. They now frequently sell the cocoons to the European factors, they making advances on the coming crop. If they spin it themselves, it is sent to the markets of Tripoli, Damascus, Hamath, and Beyrout, or Aleppo ; each of these places manufacturing it extensively. Each also requires a different quality to suit the particular fabrics they work. The women work the refuse into yarn, and make of it scarfs, shirts, &c., mostly for home consumption. The women of the villages are gene-

village, with shops and an active population. It is one of the principal thoroughfares of the mountains of Kesrouan ; from hence I descended to the bottom of the beautiful gorge of the Nahr el Kelb. Stupendous mountains shut the stream already well grown within its bed, which, as if content, dashes brawlingly along, leaving grateful shadow, verdure, and abundance on its narrowed banks. Ascending the northern face, we rode on amidst the villaged and convented Kesrouan, and saw my tent pitched, overlooking the gift of God to my nation,—the blue, free, glorious ocean ! From my lofty eyrie I looked down on its depths. My home ! my friend ! to me to be on the sea-shore is half to be at home : it is not that from childhood I loved it ; it is not that my youth was past tossed on its waters ;—it may be that it washes my own loved land ;—it is that, as an Englishman, I feel it my own ; that what the desert is to the Arab, the sea is to us—our slave,

rally seen occupied spinning yarn ; the men make it up. A woman will thus, out of what would otherwise be wasted, make four shirts a year, and two scarfs. Thus the Christian villagers are usually clad in fine silken shirts, the produce of the industry of the women. Deir Sufran produces a great deal of silk, and its women are very active in their way, clothing with their labours husbands and brothers. The shirts are the same for men and women,—loose, broad-sleeved, and collarless.

our good, our might.* On the next day a rapid march brought me early to Beyrout ; I pitched my tent at the dubious St. George :—

————— “ The very spot,
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.”

I found the inn crowded with bright accoutrements, fresh travellers, their garrulous bear-leaders and dragomans, which annoyed me ; but the plentiful breakfast consoled me. Nor was it, spite of this glimpse at comfort, with regret that I returned to pass my last night beneath my canvas walls. The old quaint mosque of St. George stood in silence ; the moon, now at the full, rode alone in quiet beauty in the sky, and well enough she lighted up the scene. The river, still and deep, caught her reflection, and flowed breathlessly along. One palm rose tall and stately ; the bulbul thrilled his softest notes ; the chicala trickled out its lowest tones ; the bull-frog murmured low and subdued ; all nature reposed, exhausted by the heat of noon, now gathering vigour to meet the advancing sun. My travel o’er, the exhaustion of nature

* Et n’est-ce pas, en effet, une seconde patrie pour un Anglais que les vaisseaux et la mer.—*Madame de Staël*.

seemed to me a sympathy ; and as a kind friend's best consolation is attentive, watchful silence, so my heart thanked Nature for the boon. For a time I have done with yon fair land, and life's short span too truly tells that we may never meet again. My course turns back to the busy world, there to wrestle and to strive, to win or lose, to rise or fall, to gain—perhaps to die—at last.

“ Away ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses,
In you let the minions of luxury rove ;
Restore me the rocks where the snow-flake reposes,
If still they are sacred to freedom and love.”

Of all this travel, all these hours of freedom, liberty, and waywardness, nothing will remain but the memory ; of these close communions with Nature and solitude, nothing but their effects ; renewed resolution and energy. All is with the past ; and if I may hope that my work has pleased or bettered any reader, sweeter will its recollection be.

“ Till youth's delicious dream is o'er,
Sanguine with hope we look before,
The future good to find ;
In age, when errors charm no more,
For bliss we look behind.”

Fain would I yet dally on, a lonely student, a

rover o'er desert and wild, living with the present, storing up the rich history of the past. But the time has come to throw aside the pleasant mantle of one's wishes, and to make a name—and if it may be,—a fame. To lean upon ourselves alone, and on our own resources, is every man's best chance for that :

“ In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb driven cattle ;
Be a hero in the strife.”

Dig up the talent ; remove its cloth ; and let us go forth to meet the future with a firm determination to do right, and recognise in all His works our Father and our God.

But I approach the confines of my labour, and already, perhaps, the reader is weary with the tale. If at any time during our road I have enlivened him, or taught him what was new and strange, my toil is repaid. If he has wearied of me and sunk by the way, let me hope that his guide may be forgiven : let him plead his good will though he wanted the power to instruct. It would be hopeless to add poetry to the East :—traveller, sage, antiquarian, poet, statesman, and idler—all have poured their spirit over the land.

For your patient listening to my tale, receive all my thanks ; and believe, that, in the language of the Ansayrii—

“ Iserakoom Berrakoom,
Habbee feekoom killcoom.”

THE END.

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